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Memoir of William Tanner

I remain very affy
J Banner

MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM TANNER,

COMPILED

CHIEFLY FROM AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORANDA.

EDITED BY JOHN FORD.

LONDON:
F. BOWYER KITTO, BISHOPSGATE STREET, WITHOUT.
YORK:
WILLIAM SESSIONS, LOW OUSEGATE.
1868.

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Duplicate money

INTRODUCTORY PREFACE.

In the second month of 1867, the widow of the late William Tanner placed in my hands the manuscripts of her late husband, for the purpose of publication, together with a preface prepared by herself. Early in the third month of that year, increased illness of a few days ended in her death. The task of conducting the memoir through the press, in accordance with the wishes both of William and Sarah Tanner, was, by the request of the family of my late relatives, continued under my care. In the progress of the work they have given much valuable assistance, and the whole has passed under their revision.

Some introductory remarks by William Tanner, set forth his estimate of the liabilities as well as the value of autobiography. His manuscripts show, by frequent obliterations, and by the withdrawal of many leaves,

his care in revising and arranging the memoranda, the commencement of which dates from his boyhood.

In committing the memoir to the press for publication, the relatives of the deceased, in common with the Editor, unite in heartfelt sympathy with the "fervent prayer" of the widow, as she penned her last tribute to the memory of her beloved husband, recorded in the preface from her own hand.

York, 21st of 3rd Month, 1868.

PREFACE.

BY SARAH W. TANNER.

THE following compilation has been made under much bodily and mental feebleness, and under a strong sense of inadequacy for the work. It has been in every sense a work of love, and undertaken in the earnest hope that it may be made the means of giving more lasting influence to a life so singularly devoted to God and to his fellows.

It is offered to his friends, and especially to his YOUNGER friends, with the fervent prayer that it may be made the means in the Divine hand, of animating them to press forward in the path he trod, and that thus, he being dead, may yet speak to their souls words of cheer and instruction.

INTRODUCTION,

BY WILLIAM TANNER.

CONSIDERATIONS ON AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

"I have entered to-day upon my fiftieth year. In addition to the higher and more solemn considerations, suggested by the thought of the past and the future, my attention has been more turned, as it had often been before, to the question of whether it might not be well for me to attempt a connected written review of my own course of life, with the idea of continuing it from time to time, if opportunity should be afforded for it.

Apart from all considerations personal to myself, I am inclined to think that the preparation of autobiographies is a desirable thing. How great soever may be the deductions from the value of such records, resulting from the extent to which self love, and unworthy motives of various kinds, may influence their preparation; it seems to me that a man must be more than commonly blind to his own imperfections and short-comings, and to the benefits and blessings

bestowed on him by his Father in Heaven, not to find in a record of his own past life, much which should prove deeply instructive to himself.

And again, there are few men whose lives are not so interwoven with those of their fellows, but that some of their survivors might derive profit from the perusal of a record, in which they would have a more or less direct interest. The question of the use which should be made of such remains, supposing them to be left to survivors, belongs in most instances, rather to them than to the writers. In the great majority of cases, their chief value would result from their furnishing information or other instruction to a small circle of relatives and friends. In other cases, the circle being somewhat wider, recourse may be had to printing without publishing. And again, in other instances, publication may afford the readiest means of supplying such a circle, though the life so pourtrayed, may be, to a large extent, destitute of interest to the general public.

Upon the whole, my own conclusion is to do my best to set in order such reminiscences of my own course, as may appear likely to interest my family and friends, without attempting to decide whether any, or what use should hereafter be made of them. I have in my possession, a series of memoranda extending over nearly

forty years; but whatever may have been the value of these records to myself, I have long been of the mind that many of them were not such as I should wish to pass into other hands, pourtraying, as they do, those transitory states of religious feeling, the real meaning and character of which I believe to be often greatly misunderstood by those who are the subjects of them, and which, even if they be understood, are not of a character to be divulged. I purpose therefore, to make use of certain portions only, in preparing the present sketch, and to supply so far as I may be able, the links which appear to be missing."

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Ashley Farm near Bristol

MEMOIR OF

WILLIAM TANNER.

CHAPTER I.

Early life of William Tanner—his own recollections of the period—early religious impressions—pastoral visit of J. J. Gurney—the duty of daily prayer—first Yearly Meeting—the men of the day—silence of the mind--delicate health--voyage and collision—imminent danger—winter in Malta—traditions, &c. of Paul's shipwreck—return home in improved health.

THE subject of the following brief sketch was the eldest son of Arthur Thomas and Mary Tanner, of Sidcot, Somerset, where he was born on the 15th of 5th month, 1815.

He showed early indications of a most loving nature, great quickness of apprehension and much vivacity of mind. These qualities distinguished him through life, and were combined with a clear discriminating judgment. He possessed unusual power of sympathy, and a sensitiveness of nature which whilst it increased his capacity for enjoyment, interfered with his comfort and threw at times a transient cloud over his happy buoyancy of spirits.

A feeling of love to God and a filial fear of offending Him, manifested in great tenderness of conscience, and an habitual dread of any deviation from strict truthfulness, were strongly marked features of his character at a very early age. In illustration of this, his dear mother writes: "One evening, on visiting his bedside, I found him anxious and thoughtful; and in reply to my enquiry as to the cause, he told me he was afraid he had told an untruth; for after having said that he would put away his spade with which he had been working in his little garden, he had left it there. He asked if I thought he should be forgiven, and begged me to pray for him, saying he had prayed for himself. I endeavoured to explain to him the difference between a wilful falsehood and the forgetfulness from which his error had proceeded, wishing him to be more cautious in future of speaking positively. After this he seemed comforted. The tenderness of conscience of this dear child—not yet quite seven years old, and the way in which he has at times been prepared to be even a little counsellor to me, are indeed cause for humble thankfulness to our Heavenly Father, who I trust will still protect and guide him."

In some memoranda subsequently made by himself, he says: "Some of the earliest remembrances I have of life are those of occasions in which my mind was softened and contrited by a sense of the love of God, and of my dependence upon Him for every blessing;

and under this feeling, I was led to make known my child-like requests unto Him. However imperfect my understanding might have been of the duty and privilege of prayer, I was very early led to the practice, and to feel comforted and relieved by the adoption of it. The first impression I received on this subject was made by hearing my dear mother engaged in the silence of the night, in presenting her supplication before the Lord, when probably unaware that any mortal ear was open to the sound. The conversation which I had afterwards with her on the subject, became the means of fixing deeply in my mind a sense of the importance of prayer. After a time, it became my practice on retiring to bed at night, to consider the different actions of the day, to examine what part of them had been wrong, and to ask for Divine forgiveness. During the day too, and sometimes while amusing myself with my brothers and our playmates, I was suddenly brought to the consideration of things of eternal concern, and to desire that I might be found seeking them. But alas! how soon, at this early period, was the work of mercy marred by the counteracting influence of the "motions of sin," more especially by feelings of envy, jealousy, discontent and disagreement with my playmates; so that at times I seemed to have exchanged peace and comfort of mind for feelings of an opposite description. Experience of both these kinds continued and increased with my growth and strength."

"In the eleventh year of my age I was very powerfully affected by the circumstances attendant on the illness and death of a beloved aunt, my mother's half sister. Never I believe can some of the impressions then made be erased from my remembrance, notwithstanding that they were again and again hidden from my view by the beclouding influence of sinful feeling. I had myself, before this time, had a long illness, during which, though very young (only six or seven years of age), I was often comforted by a sense of my Heavenly Father's kindness towards me."

Of this period his dear mother writes: "In the autumn of 1822 he had an alarming illness, and his recovery seemed for a time very doubtful. He was permitted to rally however, but in a few weeks subsequently, an attack of fever laid him very low again. A physician who was promptly consulted, confirmed our fears that there was a tendency to atrophy, and for some time his life seemed to hang on a slender thread. But the means used for his restoration were blessed beyond our expectation, and we thankfully rejoiced in a steady improvement, though so gradual that he was confined to bed for several weeks. He bore his sufferings with much patience, and his confinement was cheerfully submitted to, under the impression that it was according to the will of his Heavenly Father, and he often spoke with gratitude of the provision made for all his wants and his daily comforts. When he was

thought well enough to join the family, he was reluctant to leave his chamber of seclusion, and day after day asked to stay a little longer, saying, 'Oh, I have been so happy here that I do not want to go out into the world again.'"

To resume his own narrative: "In 1826 I went with my brothers to a day school, in which I continued till the end of 1830.* During this time I was a good deal engaged in the distribution of tracts, in collecting for the Bible Society, and in efforts to promote the abolition of slavery, &c. My interest too became increasingly strong in the momentous enquiry: 'Do I love the Lord or no,—am I His or am I not?' There has however been no period of my life in which I so much yielded to the influence of sinful feelings,—almost at times to the exclusion of Christian hope. Nor can I look back with any other than deep regret on the unprofitable nature of my communications with school fellows."

In the beginning of 1831 he came to reside in Bristol to gain a knowledge of business. Of this important step he writes: "I am now on the point of leaving home to settle in Bristol, and I shall, in consequence, be in great measure deprived of parental care and

* This school was conducted during the latter part of the time he was there by Thomas Ferris, between whom and his scholar an affectionate interest sprang up that only terminated with the life of the latter.

watchfulness. But, oh Lord! Thou who hast created me and hast hitherto preserved and cared for me, be Thou pleased in Thy mercy still to extend towards me Thy preserving care, and whether it be Thy will that I should be early taken from this probationary state, or that I should longer remain in it, Thou knowest that all my prayer and all my desire before Thee now is, that I may know Thy will, and be enabled to perform it to Thy praise. Amen."

Of this period a fellow apprentice writes since his decease: "When I first knew him he was a youth of about eighteen years of age. He was at that early period one who sought and feared the Lord. I well remember how in an evening he would retire early to his bed-room, and when we went up we often found him with his Bible open before him, having, as I felt assured, been reading and pondering its wondrous truths. At that time my own mind was, through the Lord's mercy, deeply feeling the reality and importance of eternal things, and the example I saw in dear William served much to deepen these impressions within me. Indeed I may say that up to this time, the remembrance of his youthful piety has left a profitable impression on my mind."

To resume his own memoranda: "Most of this year, 1831, was spent in Bristol at my uncle's. During this period a pastoral visit from J. J. Gurney was an occurrence of deep importance to me, and more especially

the charge given me by him, 'never to omit the duty of prayer at least twice in the day.' Some doubt would perhaps be felt as to the accordance of such advice with the views of our Society; but for myself I can only say that even my imperfect adoption of it, has proved an unspeakable comfort and benefit to me, not only when deprived, as I have been on some occasions, of all outward means of instruction, but also when surrounded by them. I became also about this time much more diligent in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and was often permitted to receive reproof and instruction from the sacred page."

In 1831 he attended for the first time, the Yearly Meeting in London; on which he remarks many years afterwards: "The conduct of our society's discipline has been to me a matter of great interest, from my earliest attendance of the meetings devoted to it; and the thought of attending the legislative gathering, had I believe, a much stronger attraction for me than the hope of seeing the great metropolis for the first time. I have still a strong recollection of some of the things that were said and done, and of some of the men and women who were most prominent on that occasion; and truly there were giants among us in those days.* The persons and voices of some of them were previously

* A common conclusion of many minds in retrospect of the cotemporaries of their early years. Probably men of stature are pretty equally distributed to each generation of the race.—Ed.

familiar to me, from their having laboured in the Gospel in Bristol and Somersetshire; but there were others whom I saw and heard for the first time. Samuel Tuke, I think, impressed me the most upon the whole, as a Quaker statesman, as William Forster did (chiefly perhaps on subsequent occasions), as a Quaker preacher.

In the autumn of 1832 my health so far gave way that I had to return home, and was detained there in consequence, many months. The disease was at first of a chronic kind, but assumed afterwards a more acute form. One night in particular, the pain having suddenly increased, I was very apprehensive what the termination would be. The suffering of the body however, bore but a small proportion to that of the mind. The view of eternity was then before me in all its awfulness, accompanied by a heart-rending view of my want of preparation for it. Oh! how was the self-righteous feeling, which I found had been built up within me, broken to pieces, and seen to be as filthy rags;—not one single ground of hope appeared, on which I might rest in any degree; save only the remembrance of that great atonement which had been made upon the cross for sin. Great, I know, has been the unworthiness, with which I have since been found occupying with that grace of the Gospel which was then disclosed to my view; but still the hope in which I was made to participate, has been mercifully continued to me, and will I reverently trust, become more fully the regulating principle of my life.

Blessed be God for His unspeakable gift of a Saviour! But so far was this view of the free mercy of God from inducing the inclination 'to continue in sin, that grace might abound,' that an increased desire sprang up in my heart, to follow the example of the blessed Saviour, and to submit to the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit."

"Whilst recovering from this illness I was at times distressed from an idea that the exercises of worship in which I was wont to engage, might arise from what is termed 'creaturely activity.' I had never been able to understand what was meant by a cessation of thought, or an entire silence of the mind, though at one time, I had a full belief of its being essential to the performance of true worship. I had found that the only way to divest the mind of unprofitable thoughts, during the times set apart for worship, was to lift up my heart to the Lord in prayerful desire for His gracious assistance, and for the renewed extension of His saving mercy towards me. But this did not seem to me to accord with the advice I had read, to cease from all our own thoughts, even those of a religious kind, and hence now my distress. One day as I sat in meeting with my mind oppressed by this consideration, I was suddenly encouraged to hope that my prayers and exercises, worthless and feeble as they were in themselves, would nevertheless be heard and accepted by my Heavenly Father, whilst they continued to be

offered in humility and sincerity of soul. And as an evidence that such would be the case, a text of Scripture occurred to my mind, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, &c.' accompanied by an impression that my dear mother would repeat it among us before the close of the Meeting. This proved to be the case, to my unspeakable joy and relief. Never since have I dared to doubt that the prayer of the humble will be received by Him, who, blessed be His name, remains to be a God hearing and answering prayer. It is an exercise on which a special blessing seems to me to rest, and one from which I fear many are deterred, through an obscurity of view respecting the preparation which is needed for it. May the Father of all our mercies be pleased to pour forth upon us more and more the spirit of grace and of supplication, until at length it may be said of every one among us, 'Behold he prayeth.'"

In 1833, his residence in Bristol was terminated by increased interruption to health, and after much anxiety and prayer for right guidance, it was decided that he should spend the following winter at Malta, and other places in the south of Europe, under the care of George Waring, whose intelligent companionship and watchful oversight, proved him well deserving of the trust confided to him. They embarked at Falmouth, in a government steam packet, on the 6th of 11th month. The following are extracted from a journal of the voyage.

8th. Made some enquiries to-day about the quantity of spirits supplied to the crew, and find the regular allowance is a gill per day to each man, the engineer and some others having half a pint each. One accident has already occurred on board through drunkenness. The Gunner of whom I made the enquiry about spirits, professes himself a strong advocate for their use, and quotes his own experience as a positive proof of their beneficial effect, declaring that at a time when he abstained, he wanted to eat three times as much as now! This I told him I could readily believe, as I considered the invariable tendency of spirits was to weaken the stomach; but he contends that the loss of appetite is a decided advantage. I also enquired about the religious instruction given to the men, and was told that no service was performed on board, except that on the first Sunday in the month, the articles of war are read! What a condition for a community calling itself Christian!"

A few hours after leaving Gibraltar, they had a very narrow escape from shipwreck, in consequence of being run into by another vessel. The night was very dark, and for a time every one believed that the steamer was sinking. The jolly boat was carried away, together with a considerable part of the bulwark of the vessel, and one side of the paddle-box. The cut-water of the ship that had struck them was forced into the side of the steamer, where

it happily remained firmly fixed, until they had regained the shelter of Gibraltar, where the damage was repaired.

After describing the accident in a letter home, he adds, "I was enabled throughout to keep quiet and composed, and though on the first alarm being given, I certainly experienced a feeling of indescribable terror and anxiety, it was not long before this subsided into an humble reliance on the promises of Him whose promises can never be broken, and the language of my heart seemed continually to be, 'Lord I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.' After we reached the deck, our situation was painful in the extreme, not knowing but that at any moment we should feel the vessel sinking under us, and in addition to the view of an approaching eternity, there was added an awful feeling of solicitude on behalf of my fellow voyagers, by very few of whom a right feeling was evinced on the trying occasion. Recollections too of the beloved friends whom I might never see again, rushed into the mind with a force of which it would be in vain to attempt a description. But painful as was that time of suspense, it was one, the recollection of which I desire may long remain with me, and that the awful realities which were then so vividly presented to the view, may be retained in my remembrance. Thus you will see that the precious gift of life has been once more renewed, under circumstances peculiarly

calculated to call forth the feeling of thankfulness to the Great Giver, as well as the desire so to occupy with it, that it may redound to His praise."

They reached Malta in safety, after a voyage of nineteen days; and the health of the invalid had greatly improved during the time they were at sea. He continued to gain strength after landing, and in the course of another month or so, reports himself as being as well, and able to bear as much fatigue as at any time in his life. He and his companion took a furnished house in the neighbourhood of Valetta, and found abundant pursuit of interest in exploring the botany of the island, collecting shells on its shores, and in other kindred objects; besides entering with lively interest into the history and present state of the inhabitants, the labours of the Bible Society, and the philanthropic efforts being made in the way of schools and otherwise. The following extract is dated 4th of 2nd month, 1834.

"Breakfasted at half-past six, and set out soon after, on our long talked of expedition to St. Paul's Bay, which is situated at quite the northern extremity of the island, eight or nine miles from Valetta. It runs up, I should think, a distance of at least a mile and a half inland, so that the description given in the Acts, a certain creek with a shore, would be quite applicable to it; the spot where the wreck took place seems pretty well ascertained to have been on the

right side of the entrance to the bay, between the shore and a little island called Salmonetta. At this place there is often a current setting across from the opposite shore, running directly in opposition to the one from behind the island, which answers to the words 'where two seas meet;' and this is more particularly the case when the Euroclydon, or north-east wind happens to blow, the same which we find had prevailed a little before, and which probably continued to do so at the time when the wreck occurred. The coast at this place is rather precipitous, so that it seems most probable that the safe escape to land was made on the opposite side of the bay, where also, tradition represents the apostle as having first landed. There is a little pillar erected on the spot, where he is said to have stood and preached, and from which a stream of fresh water runs, which the Maltese suppose to have issued first at the command of the saint. We first landed on the point close to the island, and after picking up a few small shells, and bits of the rock, as relics of the place, we walked round to the opposite side of the bay, where the pillar is erected. There is little to be seen; but the evidence which exists, independently of tradition, of the identity of the spot, renders it not a little interesting."

"10th of 2nd mo.—To-day is the feast of St. Paul, being, as is supposed, the anniversary of his shipwreck, and the day has been, I think, in all respects,

worthy of its predecessor; the weather having been exceedingly tempestuous, much more so than any we have witnessed here before; the sea has been unusally rough, and the storms of hail and rain frequent and heavy. It is somewhat curious that this change in the weather should have been produced by the blowing of the N. E. wind, the same which is supposed to have driven the apostle and his company towards these shores: it is called by the Maltese Gregale, and is by far the worst which prevails here. In the morning, George Waring went across to the town, but the sea became too rough to allow of his returning in the boat. In the afternoon we went out as far as Fort Tigue, to get a view of the waves breaking over the rocks at the point, the sight of which was exceedingly grand; we were soon however, drenched by the spray and rain, and on our return home we were not a little glad of the fire which had been kindled for us, 'because of the present rain, and because of the cold.'"

On the 12th of 2nd month, when his stay at Malta was drawing to a close, he writes: "I think there never was a time when my desires for the temporal and spiritual welfare of my friends, have been so much called forth, as during the period of separation from them: and very often have I been permitted, I trust, to know something of the blessed privilege of commending them in prayer to the God of all

grace, humbly desiring that they may increasingly know their sufficiency to be of Him. And comforting indeed has been the belief, that the prayers of these dear friends have been ascending to our Heavenly Father on my behalf, that whilst dwelling in a land of darkness and of drought, I may witness the blessing of preservation and spiritual support. This has, I reverently believe, been ofttimes my experience, deeply as I have again and again to mourn over the indwelling of sin and corruption. Nor have I ever, I think, been made more sensible of my entire inability to do any thing for the furtherance of the great cause which I trust I have in degree at heart; so that I have sometimes thought that the only good which could possibly result from my stay in this place, (I mean besides that of the renovation of health) would be that of mortifying the desire to do, or rather to be thought to do, something for the benefit of my fellow-creatures. Oh that I may be preserved from falling into the condemnation of those who 'love the praise of men more than the praise of God.' But very often do I feel the need I have of the reproof given to His disciples by our blessed Lord, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of,' seeing that so much unworthiness and pride remain mixed up, even with my best desires. Oh for more simple and firm reliance on the power of that Divine grace, which alone can subdue the power of evil, and cleanse us from all its varied pollutions."

Early in the following month they quitted their winter's retreat for Syracuse, Messina and Palermo. From Catania they attempted the ascent of Etna, but were soon compelled to relinquish it by the deep snow that still rested on the sides of the mountain. They afterwards proceeded as far as Marseilles in a coasting vessel, crossed to Bordeaux, and thence took passage to Dublin. Their voyages in foreign vessels had been very tedious, and the want of proper food and accommodation, rendered this the more trying; but they were mercifully preserved from danger, and finally reached Bristol in the early part of Sixth month, 1834.

The object of the voyage appeared to have been fully answered, and a period of health and comparative vigour succeeded, causing deep thankfulness of heart to the Lord, on the part of those who had watched his feeble and precarious condition with so much anxiety.

CHAPTER II.

Return from Malta — Cheddar — Prospect of service there — First appearance as a minister of the Gospel—His ministry recognised—Unites with his mother in religious service at Cheddar and in some neighbouring villages—His thirtieth birthday—more meetings in the villages—notice of Arthur T. Tanner—service in a journey through Devon and Cornwall—happy experience of a poor idiot.

THOUGH he returned home from the Mediterranean in a state of greatly improved health, it was thought desirable for him to have a time of entire relaxation before entering on the cares and toils of business.

Of this period he writes near the close of 1834. "The last six months have been spent among my beloved friends, to whom I was permitted to return in the sixth month last, having undergone in our journey home, many privations and hardships, and witnessed many gracious deliverances. How far there has been on my part anything like an acknowledgment of what I owe to so gracious a God, for these and numberless other mercies, is often a matter of serious and awful consideration. Great I know is the condemnation of which I am deserving, but if there be the ability given me to strike upon my breast and exclaim with truth, 'God be merciful to me a sinner'—I may yet have

hope. Oh that for the sake of the blessed Jesus, and of His merciful atonement, it may please a holy and gracious God yet again to blot out my transgressions, and to wash away my sins; and that He would indeed be pleased to lead me forward in the paths of righteousness, for His great name's sake. Amen!"

16th of 2nd mo. 1835.—"After having remained for so long a time on my oars, as regards my employment in business, it is concluded for me to undertake the manufacture of paper at Cheddar, where I shall probably remove next month. In the prospect of this undertaking, trifling as it is to many others, I have felt many doubts and apprehensions, both as regards my fitness for it, and the general propriety of taking such a step. But I believe it has not been decided on either by my friends or myself, without desire for the providential direction and blessing of our Heavenly Father, or without the putting up of humble prayer to Him that these might be vouchsafed, so now do I desire that we may not give up to anxiety or mistrust; but that we may on this, as well as on other occasions, stay our minds in the full confidence, that if we are but found seeking above all other things, an inheritance in the undefiled kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, all other necessary things will be added unto us."

"In looking forward to a residence at Cheddar, it has sometimes appeared to me as though an open door was presented there, to all such as are made to desire the

promotion of their Saviour's kingdom. May God Almighty grant that if this should be at all the case in my own experience, ability may be given me heartily to perform whatever may thus be presented, not as unto men, but unto Him alone. Amen.

For many years I had the impression that I should one day be called on to evince my attachment to the cause of Christ, by publicly declaring to others, the message of reconciliation wherein I had been made to rejoice; and in 1838 I was led to yield to a strong impression that a necessity of this kind was laid upon me.* Many times since then I have been thus engaged; often in the feeling of great weakness, and of my deep unworthiness to declare the counsel of God; but still under a humble persuasion that these unworthy efforts will be overruled to the promotion of His own glory. The language addressed in the Revelation to the church at Sardis, has been awfully brought home to my mind this evening, 'I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received, and hold fast and repent.' May God grant me grace still to hold fast the hope of His mercy, and more unreservedly to repent of my evil way, and to give myself to Him! Amen."

"23rd of 5th mo. 1839.—The consideration of the uncertainty of time has of late often occupied my mind;

* He first spoke as a Minister of the Gospel at a Monthly Meeting at Chew Magna in 1838, being then in his 22nd year.

my own state of health, though tolerably good, having afforded some indication that there is a peculiar uncertainty attaching in my case to the tenure of life; and yet how little does my daily course exemplify the exercise described in the language, 'Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments.' Oh for a deeper humiliation of heart before God! Oh for a more abiding sense of the love wherewith He visits His people, and supplies all their need according to the riches of His own glory—and for a more reverent acceptance of the communion and instruction of His Holy Spirit! It has never seemed to me that length of days is an object to be desired for those who are prepared, through the mercy of God, to enter on that everlasting rest which remains to His people, and so strong is my impression of the trial of our faith which remains to some of us in particular, if life should be spared, that I seem to have an increasing perception of the blessedness of the experience of those who are called to sleep with Jesus. Above all would I pray for ability to adopt the language, 'Whether I live or die I am, the Lord's.'

'Where tempests toss, and billows roll,
And lightnings flash from pole to pole,
Sweet is the thought to me,
That one day it shall not be so,
In that bright world to which I go,
The tempest will forget to blow,
There shall be no more sea.'"

"Cheddar, 1st of 11th month, 1839. At our last Monthly Meeting, which was held at Bath, my friends came to the decision to recognise me as one who has been called to the work of the ministry. May this proceeding prove to have been a right one, and may it receive from the Head of the Church, that blessing which alone can cause the provision of Zion to become available in 'satisfying her poor with bread.' I do not apprehend that any increase of such service is likely at present to be called for at my hands; but I earnestly crave the ability in all things to commit my way unto the Lord, and to await from time to time His merciful disposal."

"27th 12th mo. 1839. Last First-day evening proved a solemn season in our family at Sidcot. My dear mother was engaged in an impressive and affecting manner, to express her solicitude for the spiritual welfare of her children; that they might indeed be found honouring the Lord with their substance, and with the first fruits of their increase. Whilst adverting to deficiencies in her training, of which she had been made sensible, she said that there were none of these she had so much to regret, as the not having more fully directed our attention to the duty and privilege of prayer; but she might tell us that often, while sleep had closed our eyes, had she been engaged by our bedsides in earnest petitions on our account. That of late also she had been engaged in agonizing prayer for our

preservation, and that in the last great day of heavenly account, not one of us might be wanting. In adverting to the prayerful exercise of the prophet Daniel, she also expressed her desire that Daniel's God might be our God, and that to Him, in like manner, we might continually be prepared to make known our requests."

"In the 2nd month, 1840, my dear mother and I felt it incumbent upon us to mention to the Monthly Meeting, a concern which we felt to call together the inhabitants of some neighbouring villages, for the purpose of religious worship, particularly those within the parish of Wedmore; and liberty having been given us for this service, meetings were held at Wedmore, Allerton and Cheddar. An apprehension that such service was called for, had for some time rested indistinctly with me, but I could see no way to enter on it, except in the hope that my dear mother might have her mind directed to a similar engagement. This proved at length to be the case, and I desire to record with feelings of humble thankfulness, that way was not only made in the good providence of God, for the appointment of these meetings, but also that they proved to be occasions in which some ability was experienced to ascribe 'Glory to God in the highest,' and to proclaim to our fellow sinners the message of peace and deliverance, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

"21st of 12th mo. 1840. Called on Robert Clark, who was confined by illness to his bed. He spoke in a lively manner of his sense of the love of God—of His goodness towards him all his life long. 'I have felt His forgiving love,' he said, 'for more than fifty years. It was in the Sabbath school that I was first made sensible of it.' He dwelt at some length on the infinite mercy displayed towards us by the coming of our Holy Redeemer, and in the atonement made by Him for the sins of the world—that he felt it to be the only ground of hope which he possessed—and 'yet,' he said, 'of how little value would all this be to us, if it was not for the influence of the Holy Spirit, by which our minds are quickened to a sense of them.' There were times, he said, in which the Lord was pleased in a peculiar manner to visit our minds by the power of His Spirit. He lamented deeply the rebellion against God which he had manifested all his life long, and that even on his bed of sickness, he often had vain and foolish thoughts rush into his mind; but still he felt constrained to speak to the praise of Him whose love had been again and again renewed towards him. This aged disciple is a signal instance of the benefit and blessing resulting from the labours of the late Hannah More in Cheddar. Often too have I heard from him how great a change he had witnessed in the village in connection with her labours, and those of her sister Martha."

"19th of 9th mo. 1841. Christian hope and consolation have often been at a low ebb with me of late. Outward trials connected with our business undertakings, having pressed upon me to such a degree, as almost to prevent at times my realizing the truth that 'the Lord is good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon Him.' By far the most painful feature in these trials has been that of their having arisen, as I believe, from great, though unconscious imprudence on my part. May the Lord in His great mercy grant such deliverance as may seem good to Him, and above all, cause that His own gracious purposes and work may be carried forward. May He extend again the blessing of His free forgiveness and the influence of His cleansing grace!"

"15th of 5th mo. 1845. My thirtieth birth-day! How many more years have already been allotted me, than I had at one time the smallest reason to suppose likely! But let me not be induced from hence to think and to act, as if I could calculate with any certainty on a further extension of the gift of life. The thread on which it has hung, has often seemed in my case peculiarly slender; and yet how much practical forgetfulness have I manifested of the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death. The subject was brought powerfully home about the commencement of the present year, by the decease of our dear and valued aunt, Mary Selfe. It was my privilege to witness the

humble hope and peace which were permitted her, when near the solemn close. 'So may I die.'"

"Cheddar. 22nd of 2nd mo. 1847. The close of the year 1846 has brought with it many remembrances, which call for the exercise of gratitude to God for His mercies and benefits. During the last few months, we had an extensive prevalence of fatal, contagious disease in this village. It was my lot to be much amongst the sick and dying, and still I have been preserved in health. Towards the end of the summer, my dear mother and I obtained leave (I think for the fourth or fifth time), to unite in holding meetings with those not professing with us, in the villages around, and in the accomplishment of this object there was much also to be thankful for."

In these meetings Arthur T. Tanner, who filled the station of Elder, accompanied his wife and son. The latter repeatedly expressed the comfort and help he had felt in the sense that he had of the silent exercise of his dear father on these occasions. His concern for the eternal welfare of his dear children, was deep and genuine, but he was a man of few words, and characterized by an abiding disinclination to disclose his secret exercises of spirit, or to speak freely of spiritual things even to his children. To them, and to others, his circumspect walk spoke more impressively than many words.

William Tanner's narrative proceeds:—"A journey

of business, which I subsequently took, through Devon and Cornwall, afforded me an opportunity (as was the case also on a former occasion), of discharging some little debts of love to my dear friends in those parts. I have often felt that I have much cause to be thankful in being permitted, when closely occupied with business concerns, to labour at seasons (however unworthily) in the exercise of a higher calling. And again I have to be thankful that business concerns themselves have so far improved, as to induce the hope, that I may, at no very distant period, be further liberated from them."

"The love of money was never my besetting sin, and I trust that if ever a fitting opportunity offer, I shall not be backward in relinquishing to others the pursuits of commerce. Would indeed that some of the other allurements of this evil world, had an equally slight hold upon me! The pursuit of philanthropic objects is by no means devoid of danger, to those whose natural disposition impels them to it, as strongly as mine does; but I feel that I must have been slow to receive instruction, if this danger had not in my case been modified and held in check, by the difficulty I have hitherto experienced in the prosecution of these things. If I had had more time, and more money at command, the risk might have been greater than it has been."

"The Total Abstinence cause has, from its commencement, had no small share of interest for me, and I

desire ever to feel grateful for that which my eyes have seen of the blessing permitted to rest upon it. The work of the Bible Society too, the circulation of tracts, the establishment of schools, and of societies for enabling the poor to make a pecuniary provision for the season of sickness and old age; are objects which have also commended themselves strongly to my heart and mind, not to speak of the claims of friendship, which have not lessened of later times. But I trust that I do increasingly feel that all such objects of interest can only be blessings to us, so long as they are made subservient to the desire of ascribing 'Glory to God in the highest;' and I do at times entertain the earnest wish, that in all my communications with my fellow men, whether of a secular, philanthropic, social, or religious character, I may be able more fully to act under the regulating influence of Divine grace, and that the communion of the Holy Spirit may be more and more constantly sought unto by me."

"The call to number our blessings is just now rendered very strong by the wide spread suffering, and in the case of our poor neighbours in Ireland, the absolute famine caused by the failure of last year's crops. Whether this dispensation be regarded as an immediate interference of the Providence of Him who sees meet to correct man for iniquity, both temporally and spiritually, or as having arisen in the natural course of events, it is a most striking lesson, and points out afresh to us, how

entirely we are dependent on the Great Creator for the continuance of life, and of the means of its support. 'That Thou givest them they gather; Thou openest Thy hand, and they are filled with good. Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled: Thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.' How true of man well as as of the creatures concerning which it was written!"

"24th of 3rd mo. 1847. Visited W. Hill of Cheddar, an idiotic young man, who has been for some time confined to his bed by illness. On my asking him how he was, he replied, 'Very poorly, but happy—happy in the Lord!' I had heard previously of the remarkable degree of spiritual enlightenment which he had manifested during his illness, and proceeded to query a little with him respecting the change which had been wrought in his mind. One of his remarks was, 'I can see into it now; the Lord opened my blind eyes;' and again, 'the Lord teaches poor sinners. I have a good Father' (meaning his Heavenly Father), 'that teaches me. I can't read, but the Lord puts it into my mind.' On my coming away he said, 'T'will be a happy day when we meet together to sing Alleluia to the Lamb.' He soon after died in much peace."

CHAPTER III.

On the benefit of noting down events—Mental discipline—Controversy in the Society of Friends—his connexion with the Society imperilled—result of his mental conflict—danger of the desire to bear rule in matters of religion—opposite danger of libertinism—all believers brethren—Thoughts on Capital Punishment—Cheddar Temperance Society—Testimony of Edward Webb to W. T.'s early service.

"It has often been a matter of regret to me when referring to the memoranda contained in the book* just finished, that I should have confined myself so exclusively to religious subjects. Considerable benefit might, I think, have arisen from the habit of noting down events as they occurred, and referring also to the causes which have promoted or retarded mental progress. The great disadvantage under which I have laboured in regard to the latter, has arisen from desultory habits of thinking, writing, and acting. The disposition to fall into such habits seems to be a very common one. With me, it was in part strengthened in the days of early childhood, by the physical weakness resulting from severe illness—a cause which continued in some degree to affect the period devoted to school instruction, as well as some of the succeeding years. Of later times, business

* MS. Diary.

engagements have always been at hand to furnish an excuse when I have begun to reproach myself with the want of mental progress. I think, however, there is some improvement of late. I have found rather more time for reading, and have been careful to read through the books I have begun. The hours devoted to sleep too, have been brought within more reasonable compass, and do not now usually exceed seven hours out of the twenty-four. As to school learning it is too late to think of acquiring much of it. I have forgotten my Latin and French, and am but a very indifferent English scholar. As to History I am endeavouring to look into certain periods. The little acquaintance I have with the natural sciences, Botany and Geology more particularly, has been a source of unspeakable gratification and interest. There is one point connected with my religious experience (if to that I may lay any claim) to which my memoranda of the period, afford but little clue—the struggle of feeling in which, I with many others became involved, during the controversy prevailing in our Society some ten or more years since. I hope I shall never cease to be thankful that such a storm was permitted to pass over, without severing my connexion with the religious Society of Friends. I am well persuaded that under the Divine blessing, such a result was due to the wise and gentle treatment pursued towards me. For some years before this controversy commenced, the feelings and convictions of my own mind had been

at variance with some of the views of those who had been foremost in upholding the truth amongst us. My sympathies were, to a great extent, with the movement party, neither was I at all prepared to admit the charge often brought against them, that they sought only to gratify the desire for greater liberty, and for more conformity to the world. Natural inclination was, in my own case, strongly opposed to the relinquishment of my birthright, and as far as family connexions went, I was bound to the society by the strongest ties. I believe I should not use too strong a word, if I spoke of the anguish through which I had to pass, when thinking of the possibility of these ties being severed. I believe too, that they must have been severed if I had been required to receive Quakerism at the hands of some of those who took part in these proceedings. Through all, however, there remained the firm conviction that this society had been raised up by Divine power, to occupy an important place among the sections into which the church has become divided of latter times, and that my own convictions of the truth, accorded much more nearly, so far as I could judge, with its doctrines and principles, than with those of any other religious body. I hope that one good effect arising from the remembrance of those days has been, and is, to make me feel tenderly for those who are able to lay but a weak hold upon the faith which they possess. I believe that we, of the Society of Friends, have sometimes been in danger of

practically forgetting one of the great principles to which we have been called to give prominence, that as there is under the Gospel covenant but One Priest, so is there but One Authoritative Teacher, and to Him alone we must stand or fall. How slow is man to relinquish authority in matters of religion, nor have we any need to refer for proof of it, to the tenacity with which men have clung to the outward office of the priest, under a dispensation which has but one Mediator between God and man. Most of us shall find, if we are attentive to what is passing in our own minds, that we have the disposition within us to bear rule over one another. There is, I know, the opposite danger of spiritual libertinism, the refusal to yield that subjection one to another in love, which becomes those who are children of one family. May we be brought in all teachableness of spirit, to a simple reception of the blessed truth declared by our Lord to His followers, 'One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.'"

"8th mo. 20th, 1847. Much occupied lately with some efforts which have been making, to obtain a commutation of the sentence of a poor man, whom I believe to have been unjustly (though legally) sentenced to death on a charge of murder, at the late Somerset assizes. These efforts have happily been crowned with success. The consideration of the case has served to renew the conviction which I have always had, that

the punishment of death is a direct violation of the precepts and the spirit of the Gospel. May the day be hastened when it shall cease to involve this nation in guilt!"

"8th mo. 24th. The annual meeting of the Cheddar Temperance Society. Upwards of 400 to tea, under a tent between the cliffs. It was a hard day's work to prepare for it; but I am thankful to think it went off well in all respects. Eleven years have now passed by since we formed a society here. I believe that with more diligence, we might have done far more good; but I am sometimes encouraged by observing that we have not only amongst us individual instances showing the great benefits of Total Abstinence, but that there is evidently a change in the general habits of the community, and especially that many of the children are growing up in temperance habits."

In reference to William Tanner's early efforts to promote the moral and religious benefit of his neighbours in Cheddar and some adjoining districts, we insert here the testimony of his friend Edward Webb, a Baptist Minister at Tiverton.

"It is about 30 years ago that I first became acquainted with the late sincerely respected and beloved W. Tanner at Cheddar. For some years we were intimately associated together as fellow labourers in Sunday school, Temperance and other kindred efforts in that locality, and I have at this hour a vivid recollection

of his large-hearted, self-denying, ever ready service, in seeking to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of the dwellers in Cheddar and its neighbourhood; and I have no hesitation in believing that many will glorify God in him through eternity, as the channel of good to their souls. I heard him deliver with much trembling, his first speech at a Sunday school meeting at Cheddar, and from that day he became the warm public advocate of Sunday schools in the district. I have known him attend from 15 to 20 school meetings during the Christmas season. At that season the schools were accustomed to have their social gatherings: all felt that if they could secure the presence and help of W. Tanner and Father Clark, that they were sure of having a good meeting. As a speaker at such meetings, he was easy, intelligent, ready, self-possessed, and sometimes witty and humorous. To the earlier Sunday school teachers, his memory is still very fragrant. By him, the Auxiliary of the Bible Society at Cheddar was formed, and for years he was its devoted supporter; sparing no pains to circulate as widely as possible in the locality, the word of life. Together we canvassed the village of Priddy on Mendip, and found but one copy of the scriptures in the whole place. He proposed that to meet this unusual need, a large loan of bibles should be issued to the householders of Priddy, who might be willing to receive them; and thus a quantity of bibles, in the shape of a loan, was really given to them. At

the next meeting of the Society, it was reported that a young man to whom a bible had been given, was led to the Saviour, and had become a sincere follower of the Lord. Ever planning for the good of his fellow creatures, our dear friend, with some few others, divided Cheddar into districts, for the purpose of supplying the people with loan tracts; and for years, he provided a weekly supply of three tracts, a Peace tract, a Temperance tract and a Religious tract, for each house in the place. The Temperance cause in Cheddar owed its existence and maintenance chiefly to him. His labour, self-denial, and expense, cheerfully borne, none will ever know.

The character of the early Temperance meetings held by him, will long live in the recollection of some. The noise, the opposition, the disturbance instigated by interested parties and their votaries was fearful.* Nothing daunted, our dear friend pursued his accustomed course, and had the happiness of seeing some of the opponents, and many of the drunken, first become temperate, and then pious, devoting their time and energy to the promotion of the cause they had laboured to destroy. Those who knew the district forty years ago, and know it now, must gratefully say, 'The Lord hath done great things whereof we

* The personal annoyance, and even threats, to which he was subjected in the course of his efforts, would, at this day, excite astonishment.

are glad.' In the labour of breaking up the fallow ground and sowing the good seed, Mr. T. largely shared; and in the grand harvest home, we reverently believe, he will participate in the general joy, for then 'he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.' In connexion with the Temperance Society, he formed a Temperance Investment Club, of which there were about 100 depositors, ranging from 1d. to 3d. per week. At the end of the year, the sum deposited was returned with 8d. added from his own pocket to every 4s. 4d. of the depositors. I have known as much as £50 divided at the end of the year. His object in the formation of this society, was to encourage and stimulate abstainers. If any depositor violated his pledge during the year, he forfeited by rule, all his deposits, which were divided among the other depositors. He often visited the poor and afflicted, at which times his knowledge of medicine was of great use to him. He was the friend of all, beloved by all, accessible to all: his removal from Cheddar was regretted by all as a common loss. And now our merciful and loving Father has taken him home. May we all give diligence that we may be followers of them who, through faith and patience inherit the promises!"

CHAPTER IV.

Thoughts on the condition of the so called Religious world in England—Ritualism—Condition of the working classes in regard to Religion—Infidelity promoted by Formalism and Superstition—Commercial affairs of the country embarrassed—Decease of his friend John Mason—his character—Proceedings in regard to marriage—Conference on Slavery and the Slave Trade—Wm. Forster's offered embassy—Marriage accomplished—Removes to Bristol—attends a Rent-charge Conference—Journey in the North of England.

"9th mo. 21st, 1847. Absent from home more than a week, going first to Reading to attend the Quarterly Meeting for Berks and Oxon, for which I obtained a minute from our last Monthly Meeting. This was the first time I had been from home on religious service, and there were some other circumstances which rendered this engagement peculiarly formidable in prospect, and which should increase the feeling of thankfulness, of which I am in degree sensible, in being permitted to return in peace."

"10th mo. There is much in the present condition and tendencies of the so called 'religious world' in England, which calls for anxious and earnest attention on the part of all 'who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' One of the most remarkable revulsions in feeling ever manifested by any people, has been the disposition shown of later times by this Protestant

nation, to look again with favour towards the discarded doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome. At first sight, one was disposed to regard it with utter surprise and astonishment, but further reflection would seem to show that it is only the legitimate result of that formality in religion which has so fearfully prevailed amongst the professors of the Christian name. It is at least perfectly natural that the clergy should desire to have their claim to be considered as the mediators between God and man, more fully established than it is, by their somewhat anomalous position as ministers of the Protestant church; that they should cling with eagerness to those remnants of the old superstition, which the imperfect and unfinished work of the Reformation left behind it; and it is not surprising that worldly minded hearers, whose consciences have been half awakened by those declarations of simple truth, which have from time to time reached them, should desire the balm which is afforded by the doctrine of priestly absolution, and by that scheme of human device, under which one man undertakes to perform the work of religion, for those who are willing to pay him for so doing.

In one respect I am much surprised by the working of the new heresy. I could not but think that the avowal of Popish notions on the part of so many ministers of the Established religion, must tend to strengthen the position of the various bodies of Protestant dissenters. Instead of this, it would seem, from all that I have heard, that

most of these have of late declined in numbers and in influence. To what can we attribute such a fact, but to the apprehension that these bodies, like the low Established church, suffered themselves to be turned aside from the bearing of the Testimonies committed to them, and that the love and the fear of the world have found so large a place with them as to obscure the light of their beacon fires, and to prevent them from becoming as instrumental as they might be, in directing the tempest-tossed mariners into the haven of Truth. I greatly fear that our own Religious Society is by no means exempt from such a charge.

There is one class of our fellow-countrymen towards whom I often turn with a feeling of strong sympathy and interest—a large and increasing class; I mean those amongst the mechanics of our larger towns, whose minds are opening to the light of science, awakening from their intellectual degradation to an understanding of their mental powers and endowments, and who, in so far as this is concerned, are preparing to occupy their places in the great family of man, and to take their part in its concerns. But what of their religious condition? where is the evidence that they are acquiring that most important lesson, without which all the acquirements will leave them 'wretched and ignorant,'—the knowledge of their own weakness and sinfulness, and of the grace and truth made known in the Gospel of Christ. It is a melancholy fact that on the contrary,

many of them are seeking, by their newly acquired powers, to persuade themselves that they have no need of such enlightenment; and oh! how much is there in the testimony borne by the lives and conduct of those who profess the faith of Christ, to strengthen them in such a conclusion. If they apply to Christianity the test proposed by the Great Founder of Christianity Himself, 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and pursue the investigation only in regard to the conduct of many of its professors, who can marvel if they come to the conclusion that the Gospel of Christ is a 'cunningly devised fable,' a system calculated only to enable selfish men to veil their designs under a cloak of high profession. Infidelity has always gone hand in hand with formalism and superstition. The thought of these things often makes my heart sicken; but I desire for those, who, like myself, are confounded at the sight of these mountains of discouragement which are thus presented to our view, that we may occupy ourselves with that safe and most important engagement, of doing with all our might whatsoever our 'hand findeth to do;' so may our own safety and welfare, at least, be promoted; and so may we, with humble confidence, commit the Lord's work into His own hands."

"12th mo. 6th, 1847. The period which has elapsed since I last wrote, has been one of anxiety, arising from various causes. The commercial affairs of the country have been in a state of fearful embarrassment, arising

in part from the scarcity of food,* which followed the loss of the potato crop in 1846, and in part from the too rapid conversion of national property, from a floating, to a fixed capital, by means of vast railway undertakings. Latterly my dear mother's state of health has involved us in very painful suspense; but that too is giving place to feelings of hope and thankfulness; and greatly do I desire that we may be enabled, in the view of the many unmerited mercies dispensed, to bring home to ourselves the inquiry, 'How much owest thou unto thy Lord?' The call to the work of the ministry, which I believe myself to have received, continues at times to rest heavily upon me, as regards the responsibility which it brings me under, both towards the members of my own meeting, and to those of other meetings which it comes in my way to attend. May faith and faithfulness be alike increased, and above all, may the ability be given to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling."

"Cheddar, 31st of 12th mo. The year 1847 is closing gloomily to me. I have to-day received intelligence of the death of my dear and valued friend, John Mason, the House-Surgeon of the Bristol General Hospital, after an illness of three weeks' continuance. There is no ground for uneasiness, but much for rejoicing, on his account, but to those of us who shared his friendship, the loss is great. My own acquaintance with him had

* Wheat having risen as high as 100s. per Quarter.

only existed for about two years and a half, but it had been of a character to make me regard it as of Providential occurrence. Our hearts had become knit together by a band, which death alone could separate. His afflicted family have large claims on the sympathy of their friends. The poor widowed mother has been in a very critical state, and it was feared that the announcement which I had to make to her this morning, might produce a fatal effect; happily however it has been otherwise. I had ventured some days since, contrary to medical direction, to give her my idea of his danger; and am thankful now that I did, though for a time I was involved in much mental conflict respecting it. I am more than ever persuaded that deception is at all times as inexpedient, as it is wrong. Would indeed that this painful event may be allowed to produce its designed effect upon all our minds; that to myself in particular it may carry home the conviction that I am passing but as a stranger, through a land that is not mine. My spirit has been deeply wounded by this separation, and I feel as if one of earth's strongest ties had been cut asunder."

"Cheddar, 1st mo. 3rd, 1848. The funeral has taken place here to-day. It was an occasion which I dreaded on many accounts, but in the retrospect there is felt to be abundant cause for thankfulness. In the evening, we had a most remarkable season of quiet in the poor mother's room. I have seldom been more

sensible of the pouring forth of the spirit of supplication than at that time."

"Cheddar, 2nd mo. 10th. I have for some time past held occasional evening meetings at the school-room here, for the public reading of such books or extracts as may appear suitable. To-night I have been reading to a large and attentive company, some parts of the letters and diary of my late dear friend, John Mason. I believe many were affected, and I trust the impression may be lasting, in the case of some at least."

"8th mo. 1st. A day of much mental conflict."

"8th mo. 29th. Night turns to day!"

"10th mo. 9th. The last entries refer to a proceeding of the highest importance, into which I have entered, by making an offer of marriage to my dear friend, Sarah Wheeler. My feeling of attachment for her has been the growth of years, and I cannot but rejoice in the thankful persuasion that right direction has been granted me herein. At present my hopes seem likely to be realized; but at every succeeding step which is taken, I am reminded of the utter uncertainty hanging over the future. May the Lord in mercy grant that His blessing and direction may in all things be sought unto by us, and that acknowledging Him in all our ways, He may direct our paths, and prepare us for all the dispensations of His hand."

"2nd mo. 23rd, 1849. Attended a special meeting for Sufferings in London, called to consider the subject

of slavery and the slave trade. The conclusions come to were to prepare addresses to the different governments of Europe, &c. in reference to these evils, also a memorial to our own Government. The politician might smile at our proceedings, but to me it seemed that the united exercise of soul before the Lord, into which many were introduced under the consideration of these crying sins, was cause for reverent thankfulness. The fervent prayer that was offered by dear John Pease at the commencement of the meeting, did seem to receive an answer in the unity of feeling which prevailed on the occasion."

"5th mo. 28th to 6th mo. 1st. Attending part of the Yearly Meeting, a memorable season. The Anti-slavery concern noticed above, was most feelingly entered upon. William Forster offered himself as the bearer of the Memorial to Foreign Governments, and his services were thankfully accepted."

"Barmouth, Merionethshire, 7th mo. 1st, 1849 (First day). I have now to record the happy accomplishment of my marriage, on the 13th of last month, at Olveston. The day was, I trust, owned by the extension of the condescending care and goodness of our Heavenly Father. Our dear friends James Backhouse and John Hodgkin were with us to our mutual comfort; besides many others whose company was alike welcome. The time which has since elapsed, we have spent in Wales; and most precious has been the evidence which has been

vouchsafed to us, that our union is owned and blessed of our Heavenly Father. I should think it was not often that persons whose course in life has been so different, as ours has in many respects been, are prepared so fully and entirely to reciprocate each other's views, feelings and sentiments, as is the case with my dearest S. and myself. Certainly I do feel that my every wish is supplied by her companionship; and how great a blessing such intercourse is, can, I think, be judged of only by those who have, like myself, long trodden a solitary path."

"I would wish indeed, in looking back on that period of my life, to commemorate the numberless mercies which were therein dispensed to me. Few can have had more alleviations to such a state of things than were afforded me, by kind close friendships, and especially by the union of heart and mind which I have been permitted to enjoy with a tenderly beloved parent. Still I could not but be often sensible of the aching void which existed, and that void has now been supplied. It is not for me indeed to count upon the continuance of so rich a blessing, but with the poet I would say,

> 'What Thou shalt to-day provide,
> Let me as a child receive,
> What to-morrow may betide,
> Calmly to Thy wisdom leave.'

I have great occasion to acknowledge the gracious help which I believe has been afforded me, in regard to

this most important matter of choice in marriage. I had, it is true, an extreme dread of taking a wrong step in regard to it, but when once this affair had been decided on, I seemed not to have a single doubt remaining, and now faith has given place to sight."

From the ninth month, 1849, to the first month, 1850, William Tanner was engaged in visiting the families of Friends in the Quarterly Meeting of Bristol and Somerset. Fourteen particular meetings fell within the range of this visit. One hundred and fifty-seven visits to families or individuals were paid in Bristol. The Minute liberating him for this service was returned at the Monthly Meeting at Bath, on the 9th of first month, 1850. The following memorandum, without a date, refers to his change of residence from Sidcot to Bristol, and reviews this engagement.

"One important result of the marriage connexion referred to in the foregoing memoranda, was the conclusion to remove to Bristol as a place of residence. It was a long time before I could arrive at it. Inclination was strongly opposed to an exchange of country for town life, and of a small meeting for a large one; but in this also I have since had great occasion for the humble trust that my path was made plain before me. In the smaller meeting at Sidcot, I had enjoyed the privilege of sitting beside my dear parents, and of uniting very frequently in the work of the ministry with my dear mother, both in our own meeting and in

numerous meetings appointed from year to year, with our neighbours in the villages around us."

"Soon after settling in Bristol, I felt that I had a debt of love to pay to my old friends of the north division of Somerset, and those among whom my lot had been cast, as well as those belonging to the other meetings of the Quarterly Meeting, by visiting them in their families. I did not feel otherwise than peaceful in the retrospect of that service, but the conviction took hold of my mind that what are commonly called 'family visits' would not in future be within my line of service."

"2nd mo. 22nd, 1850. Attended a rent charge Conference in London, composed of members of the Meeting for Sufferings, and various Friends who had been appointed from the country to attend it, pursuant to a suggestion made at the last Yearly Meeting, when a proposition from Essex was before it, relating to the manner in which Friends, who are landlords or tenants, should act in reference to our testimony on this subject."

"A modified form of this proposition was submitted to us on this occasion, in the form of observations prepared by a committee of the Meeting for Sufferings. The main point of the advice which it proposed for the adoption of the body was, that Friends should make no bargain in reference to the payment of rent charge, either in hiring or letting land; and the Conference, having in the main adopted the suggestion, was adjourned to Seventh day preceding the Yearly Meeting. I confess

that to my own mind this conclusion was any thing but satisfactory. The views of Friends are so very dissimilar, as to the mode in which their testimony against a paid ministry should be borne, that I am more and more persuaded that the only safe course is, for us to leave them to follow the dictates of their own consciences. I do believe that with all our professed rejection of human authority in matters of religion, we are at times in great danger of attempting to bear rule over each other in reference to them."

"5th mo. 3rd. Visited Barley Wood. The day was fine, and the aspect of the place lovely as ever, but what a change has come over it since the days when, as a child, it was my privilege and delight to become acquainted with its late inhabitant—Hannah More."

"11th mo. 7th. Returned home after an absence of seven weeks in the North of England and Scotland. I had never been so far north before, and the few days spent in Scotland, afforded an opportunity of becoming acquainted with its wild beauties, such as I greatly prized. Of still deeper interest were the extent of Christian intercourse which we enjoyed with many of our dear friends in the north; among these, I set an especial value on the time spent with Samuel Tuke of York, George Richardson of Newcastle, and J. and M. Hipsley of Hull, all of whom are so far advanced in life, or in such infirm health, as to render our meeting again very doubtful. Very pleasant too were the visits

which we paid, in going and returning, to our dear sister Margaret Wheeler and her family. A few days spent with them at the little fishing village of Cullercoats, afforded much refreshment, both to body and mind. At Sunderland we spent a short time with Thomas Mounsey, whom we found confined to his bed by illness, from which there is no prospect of his recovering. He has had much bodily suffering to endure, but he is no stranger to that hope which is as an anchor to the soul."

CHAPTER V.

Feeble condition of health—A voyage to Madeira in prospect—Self-examination—Sail from Torquay—Arrive at Funchal—Floral beauty of Madeira—Great variety of Ferns—Visits to the Hospital and Prison—Cultivation of the Vine—Excursion to the North of the Island—Excursions to various scenes of beauty and grandeur—Leave Madeira for Lisbon and home.

"2nd mo. 2nd, 1851. Many subjects of thought and interest have come in with the New Year. Among others, we have had to make arrangements for a removal from our present habitation, having decided, after much serious consideration, to join our dear sister, Margaret Wheeler, in her occupation of Ashley Grange. At the present, our thoughts are more immediately occupied with circumstances attendant on the state of my health, which has not been good for some months past. It is now proposed that we should try a voyage to Madeira, as the most likely means of benefit; but this course is not fully decided on. The thought of making such a change has brought me into much serious feeling on various accounts. The cheerful readiness with which my dearest S. has looked towards accompanying me, if needful, has been a great comfort, and has lessened the anxiety I should otherwise have

felt on her account. Still the undertaking is a serious one for her. As to myself, I am thankful to feel the most entire confidence in the disposal of our Father in Heaven. His love has been marvellously extended towards me, all my life long, and the sense of His goodness and tender compassion has of late been unspeakably precious. I know indeed, and was never more fully persuaded, that I have been, and am, an unprofitable servant, and that had it not been for the continued visitations of love, I must have gone altogether astray as a lost sheep. I would speak with diffidence of the degree in which I have been enabled to lay hold on His help, but I am constrained to say, to the praise of His grace, that He has not left me to myself.

I desire that the present seclusion may be a season of close searching of heart, and that if the gift of life and health be renewed (which I see no particular reason to doubt may be the case), strength may be given me, to dedicate myself and my all more fully to the service of the Lord my Saviour. I have had often to mourn over the want of spiritual mindedness, and of more habitual communion of soul with God; and although in regard to the outward means of usefulness within my reach, I am not conscious of having withheld of later times, aught which I believed to be called for, the conviction has often been felt, that duties of every kind have been very imperfectly performed. To many a looker on, it may have appeared as if I might have

withdrawn myself altogether from the cares of business, but it is known to Him who seeth in secret, that in regard to this matter, I have had no desire to continue business engagements or emoluments, for one moment longer than it should be felt to be a duty to do so. I should be only rejoiced to see the time when I might prudently withdraw from them, and to testify against that unhallowed thirst for gain, which I believe to be the besetting sin of many within our own borders, who after making suitable provision for themselves, and those dependent on them, are induced to waste their time on the accumulation of wealth, which is all but certain to prove injurious to those who come after them. Let me not, however, indulge in harsh judgments, but rather beseech the Father of Mercies on my own behalf, and that of my dear Friends everywhere, that He will deliver us, for His dear Son's sake, from evil of every kind, and preserve us unto His own Heavenly Kingdom."

"2nd mo. 9th, 1851. Our plans have now so far matured that we are looking to leave home to-morrow for Torquay, and to sail from thence to Madeira, accompanied by our dear sister Margaret Wheeler. I have felt it now, as in times past, a very instructive thing, to be laid aside from active duties and engagements. And whether the present is designed as a noon tide or an evening rest, I am sure that it is wisely and mercifully dispensed."

The party sailed from Torquay, as had been arranged, and very soon the beneficial effects produced by voyaging began to be apparent, in increase of weight, and other favourable symptoms. Contrary winds and calms made the passage longer than the average, and it was not till the 3rd of 3rd month that they reached Funchal. Perhaps the following extracts from the journal may be read with interest.

"The general appearance of Madeira from the sea is rugged, barren and mountainous. It was a fine sight this morning to watch the clouds that were passing over it, and the gleams of sunshine between them, lighting up the deep ravines by which the island is every where intersected. We were much struck with the appearance of Funchal as we approached it. Its white houses lie beautifully scattered up a recess in the mountains, which tower majestically above it, and extend from the sea level to a height of nearly 2,000 feet; and barren as the more distant appearance of the island is, these ravines are clothed with the richest vegetation. Many of the houses in the outskirts of Funchal are surrounded with gardens, which yield support to trees, shrubs and flowers of tropical species. As we walked up from the boat this afternoon, we passed Bananas, Coffee shrubs, Orange and Lemon trees, laden with fruit. In other gardens we saw Peach-trees in full flower, and others with fruit of considerable size. There were Oaks, with their fresh green foliage on, and a beautiful variety of creeping

plants with bright flowers. To us, who had been deprived of the sight of land for the last eighteen days, it seemed a perfect fairy land. The house to which we are conducted has its share of attractions. The part we occupy, consists only of rooms on the ground floor, those at the back looking out on the sea, whilst in front the house is embosomed in trees, Oaks, Oranges, Oleanders, &c. The Hoya and the Heliotrope run up the wall, the latter being many feet high. The Bignonia, with its orange trumpet flower blossoms, climbs over the trees, and the Maiden-hair fern has rooted itself in the wall. The Datura, the sweet scented Magnolia and the Guava, also find a place within our precincts.

4th of 3rd mo. Took a walk before breakfast amidst the new beauties which surround us. I have made acquaintance to-day with the Palm, Dragon-tree, Sugar-cane, &c.

6th. Dr. Lund called and gave me some advice, which appeared reasonable. I was to read and write but little, to vegetate as much as possible, and to do nothing for a week to come, but boat, ride and rub myself.

10th. I wandered up a ravine, and called at a peasant's cabin, most prettily situated; the garden in front was completely covered with frames made of canes for the vines, and in summer the effect must be exquisitely beautiful; the roof was also composed in part of canes, the floor was of earth, but there was a clean

white looking bed. In one corner stood a crucifix on a table. There was an old woman, whom I took for a grandmother, two younger women and a girl. They chattered away in Portuguese, and offered me some flowers, of which they had a pretty little patch at the end of the house, verbenas, &c. These cottages of the peasantry are built of loose, dark, unmortared stones, and somewhat in the style of Irish and Scotch cabins, but the absence of smoke within, and the circumstance of there being here but little rain to affect the look of the exterior, are strong points in favour of the appearance of these cots, over that of their northern representatives. The absence of smoke in the town is still more remarkable. You see a long succession of unblemished, whitewashed fronts, relieved by Venetian shutters and balconies, and by the black, lava-like mullions and door-posts."

11th. Called on two young men, who have spent more than one winter here on account of health; one of them has interested himself about the introduction of the silk-worm, and the other about that of the cochineal insect. He shewed me a number of the latter, feeding on a plant of Opuntia (prickly pear). They are curious creatures; the young insect wanders about the leaf in search of a soft part into which to thrust its proboscis, and there lives in this position the remainder of its life. I think it is three months or more in coming to maturity. I also saw in this garden the Arrow-root under

cultivation, the Acanthus, (the leaves of which are represented in Corinthian architecture), the Indian rubber tree, &c. There are about forty species of ferns in the island, of which eleven are the same as ours, the Killarney fern being included among the number. The Adiantum Capillus Veneris is decidedly the most abundant species in the neighbourhood of Funchal, and springs up every where around. It is here no longer the fastidious little personage it is with us, but will put up with any thing, a gutter, or even a dry wall. The Nephodium Malle and the Haresfoot, which I have also under cultivation at home, are of very fine growth here. In the afternoon we had a stiff walk up one of the roof-like streets, to visit the garden of the late Dr. Renton, a very paradise of beauty, but with no one to enjoy it. There is a grand assemblage of trees to be seen here. Magnolias, with large and tall tree-stems, a Camellia of almost equal height, a large Cork tree with its tuberculous-looking bark, a Screw pine, and a splendid variety of Aloes, one of them with huge flower stems. I could not but think how much of the effect of these beauties was lost for want of more space and grassy slopes, such as we delight in at home."

19th. Went to the hospital to visit three sailors who were badly injured by the falling of masts on board their vessel, during a storm.

20th. Went again to the hospital and also to the prison. Charles Blandy accompanied me to the latter.

It is a wretched establishment, and in no way calculated to promote the reformation of the prisoners. As in the case of the prisons which I remember to have visited in Sicily in 1834, the prisoners hold communications through their grating, with the people in the street, and exhibit combs and other articles, which they make for sale. Government leaves them to be supported by themselves and their friends, and the fact appears to be that the thieves out of prison, support those who are in. Being thus free from the cost of supporting prisoners, the Government is wretchedly indifferent as to the period over which imprisonment extends. In the case of persons sentenced to transportation, it is held that the sentence only commences when they reach their destination, and years of imprisonment sometimes elapse before it is found convenient to send them away. I saw one man condemned for sacrilege to ten years imprisonment, who has already been four years in prison. Happily there are only forty-nine persons in hold at present. Assaults and petty thefts are the most frequent crimes. In one ward there was a man, (in company with several minor offenders,) who is under sentence of death for murder. Capital punishments are never carried into execution here, but persons are sometimes sent to Lisbon to be executed. One man condemned for murder, awhile since, contrived to poison himself with a salt of copper, which he made from coin in his possession. One man

seemed to fill the office of jailer and turnkey for both men and women; and the key may not unfrequently be found entrusted to the care of one of the prisoners.

21st. We went to visit the garden of a Portuguese tradesman; it was kept in beautiful order, and contained some rare plants and trees, among others, the Vanilla plant, Tamarind, Gum-Arabic, sweet-scented Olive, and the Cinnamon. The pleasantest sight of all was to see a man, whose chief pursuit is business, devoting so much care to these beautiful objects. He apologised for not possessing much knowledge of the individual plants, by saying, that he had so little time to bestow on them, that all that he could do was to treat them alike, as he did his children. He first offered us wine, but finding some of us were abstainers, a servant came after us with a plate of very fine oranges.

22nd. I rode to the Mount church, and thence across the Little Curral, a ravine of great depth and beauty, returning home by the Palheiro Road. The Mount church is an ugly structure, but most beautifully situated at a height of about 1,800 feet from the sea, and on a ridge which stands between ravines of considerable depth. The vines are trained in this neighbourhood on canes of the Arundo Sagittata. The opinion of the German and French vine dressers, is in favour of cutting the vine back much nearer to the root. In Madeira, an addition is annually made to the size

of the tree, about two or three buds on last year's shoots being left. Many of the vines are thirty or forty years old, but they are considered to have passed their prime, at twenty years. The mountain pastures are mostly held in common by the villages; each hamlet has also its "threshing-floor" placed on an eminence, and used by all.

24th. Rode up in the afternoon to the Allejera, a summer residence, situated high up the mountains, and overlooking a deep ravine. The chief object with me was to find a fern which grows there, the Ophioglossum lusitanicum. I was on the point of leaving without finding it, when a woman came up, of whom I made inquiry, by pronouncing the Portuguese word for fern. She immediately darted across to a spot where the little plant was growing up among the grass, just as our English Adder's tongue does. The Haresfoot fern also grows in the walls in that neighbourhood, in great profusion.

27th. Went again to the hospital. One of the three English sailors, whose arm was broken, is well enough to go out. The house surgeon speaks English (his father was an Englishman). They have upwards of one hundred beds; between sixty and seventy patients are in the house at present. A distinct ward is devoted to surgical cases, both on the men's, and women's, side. Chloroform is used in all their operations with good success. The insane patients are in a separate part of

the building; those of them whom I saw, appeared quite harmless: one old woman showed me her empty snuff-box, and on being told I had none, replied, "I dare say you have money."

As soon as the season was sufficiently advanced to render it prudent, the party proceeded on an excursion to the north of the island, the bold and striking character of which, afforded great attractions to the lovers of mountain scenery. The following we extract from memoranda made on returning to Funchal.

"4th mo. 4th. Went to Santa Anna. Long ascent to Antonia da Sena, the road winding between heath, myrtle and broom. We next crossed the chain of mountains which runs east and west through the island: a cutting at the summit, called the Portella (or little gate) reveals a splendid view on the other side. It did not do so to us, however, for all was hidden in mist. Descending the zig-zag path on the other side, an opening in the clouds allowed us a sight of the breakers on the shore at Porta da Cruz; and after proceeding a little further, we could trace the outlines of the Penha d'Aguia Rock, which rises 1,700 feet in an insulated mass, and fills the whole space on the shore between Porta da Cruz and Fayal. The ravines, as you descend to the former, are lovely in the extreme, thence round the Penha d'Aguia, you reach the sea by passing along the bed of a torrent, with the Penha on your right, and other precipitous rocks

on the left. We next ascend by a steep path, which winds round the western extremity of the ravine, and from thence along the side of the mountain above the sea. The height becomes rather dizzy, when suddenly we pass through an opening in the hills, directly away from the sea, and onwards through a succession of pretty lanes, which conduct us at length to the village of St. Anna, where we are again in view of the sea. The house at which travellers quarter, is large and airy, all the more so for having divers broken squares of glass. For the first time since coming to Madeira, we asked for a fire, and were supplied with one of pine sticks. The smoke proved somewhat of a deduction from the comfort which it gave us. Before night came on, we had a walk to the ravine of St. George, a little to the west. It is deep and of solemn grandeur, running up to the interior of the island. At its further extremity rises Pica Ruiva. We could descry the outlines of houses on a little platform of the mountain, at a great elevation, and so mysterious was their aspect, we could almost imagine that here

> "Heaven's own dwellers had come down,
> In earthly homes to rest."

5th. Excursion to Boa Ventura, crossed the Ravine and the Arc of St. George, the latter is a low tract of land by the sea, surrounded on all sides landward by a semi-circular range of cliffs, one point of them rising

about 2,700 feet. We passed down by a winding path on the eastern side, then through the village which occupies the low ground, and round the western point by a road cut in the face of the rock, into the Boa Ventura Valley, of which we were only sorry to see so little.

7th. Returned to Funchal, by a most splendid road, crossing the Meya Metada and Riberio Frio valleys, the latter especially beautiful, from its being clothed with the old laurels of the island, and having the bare rocky peaks rising above. A levada, which we pursued, brought us through an opening in the hills to another lovely view of the Meya Metada Valley.

21st. Went in hammocks to Santa Cruz, which we reached late in the afternoon.

22nd. An excursion in a boat to Canical, to visit the fossil beds. The principal remains have the appearance of roots of trees; besides these, there is a bed of land shells in sand.

25th. Spent the morning in rambling about Santa Cruz, and returned in the afternoon to Funchal.

26th. An excursion to Cape Giram, a splendid projection of land west of Funchal, from whence we looked down a precipice 1,800 feet on the shore below. A troop of importunate begging children, disturbed the quiet of our dinner, which we took whilst resting on the heights.

30th. Left for St. Vincente, going by way of the

Jardin. The Curral was obscured by mist, but the view cleared somewhat as we approached it. The views, as we wound round it, were very impressive, and after passing among the peaks which bound the western side, we exchanged this bold and precipitous valley for others of not much less grandeur, and of more picturesque beauty, their sides clothed with rich evergreen forests. Our road wound amongst these for hours, and when we passed from the Serra d'Agoa and Riberia Brava, by a pass of considerable elevation—the Encomeada—it was to enter the no less beautiful valley of St. Vincente, the whole being enclosed within rocky heights, excepting at its further extremity, where a little beyond the village the rocky precipices slope down to the sea, a triangular portion of which closes the landscape, as seen from above. The village is most picturesquely situated in the lower part of the ravine, embowered in vine covered chestnuts: a rushing stream winds its way between the houses and the range of pointed hills above and around, form an amphitheatre of singular beauty."

"5th mo. 1st. We set forth early this morning from our lodging place, and having gained the shore, through an opening in the mountains below the village, we passed along under a range of perpendicular cliffs of great height. The road at first lay along a low platform, thence it takes a direction along the sides of the cliffs, whereas in other places immense labour, and considerable skill, must have been needed for its

formation. Passing Pontadelgarda, we again reached the Boa Ventura: our expectation of the enjoyment to be derived from a closer acquaintance with its lovely scenes, was soon overclouded by the appearance of the weather. We had gone on for about two hours up the ravine, the sides of which were becoming more grand and precipitous at every turn, and the old evergreen forest deepening in the richness of its shade, when the whole became enveloped in a dense mist. This continued to overspread our path, until we reached the summit, breaking away however at intervals, sufficiently to allow of our discerning the perpendicular cliffs, with their overhanging woods; added to which we had fine views of large old laurels, close to us on either hand, as we ascended, not to speak of a profusion of ferns, among which Killarney appeared, running in the most free and easy way, over rocks and trunks of trees. Another fern which I had heard of as growing on the ridge between the two ravines, at length appeared, and announced our approach to the summit of Boa Ventura, an elevation of 1,000 feet above the sea level. We now commenced our descent of the Corral, and nothing could be more striking than the transition. In depth they are about equal, but the Corral is for the most part, bare and rugged, whilst in the Boa Ventura the beauty of the laurel woods sleeps as in the lap of terror. The Corral, as we descended, became quite clear, and it was a great treat to recognise clearly the mountain heights of

Pico Ruivo and the Torrinhas on the eastern side, and of Pico Grande on the western.

We reached the little hut in the valley, at which we had been recommended to lodge, a little before dark, and were somewhat dismayed at its bare accommodation, the more so, as I had a cold, and was ill prepared for roughing things. We had two rooms, the one containing two beds, and the other one, each room had a door and two windows, without glass, and the shutters of these, and the doors closed so badly, that a free current of air passed through them, as well as under the eaves of the room, and from one room to another, over the partition between them. We set to work to fasten up rugs and shawls against the crevices, and a sort of covering was formed for our bed, of a mackintosh and some sheets from the spare bed. To mend matters, we had to pay the extravagant price of five dollars for our accommodation. However the following morning proved clear, and we hired fresh men to take us back to the ridge between the two valleys, and had there a clear and beautiful view of the Boa Ventura, such an one, however, as made us long for a further acquaintance with its beauties, than that which our ascent of the preceding day afforded us. There is no question on my own mind, as to its being the finest of the scenes we have here beheld. Our men were waiting in the valley on our return to take us to Funchal."

"6th mo. 22nd, 1851. More than three weeks have elapsed since our return from our foreign sojourn,* and I desire not only to record the sense of humble thankfulness which has possessed my mind in thinking of all the mercies whereof we were made partakers, during our late separation from our home and friends, but that I may be enabled so to bear it in remembrance during the remaining days of my earthly pilgrimage, as that I may thereby be incited to more devotedness of heart, and to a more confiding trust in God. In some respects, the future appears almost as uncertain as before we left home. My health, which was greatly benefitted by the voyage, has since been very variable. Twelve months have elapsed since I first sought medical advice, and still the chief cause of my ailments appears not to be removed. But it is not for me to question the disposals of an unerring hand, and less to repine at them, and indeed I feel no temptation to do so. My song must rather be of mercies which are new every morning, and of the great love and faithfulness of the Lord my Saviour."

*The party left Madeira for Lisbon on the 11th of 5th month, and after a favourable voyage, reached home in the early part of 6th month.

CHAPTER VI.

W. Tanner's health still feeble—a coasting Voyage to Scotland—Death of Samuel Capper—Death of Rachel Priestman—Voyage to Norway—Explores some of the beautiful Fiords—Attends Friends' Meetings at Stavanger, &c.—Sufferings of a young man for refusing Military Service—Return home—Prospect of Religious Service in Norway—obtains the sanction of his friends and the needful Certificates.

"4th mo. 4th, 1852. Kept at home from Meeting by a heavy cold. Health continues at rather a low ebb with me, and the future still looks uncertain; but I am thankful to be preserved in quiet trust. Our dear friend, John Hodgkin, who has again been labouring in these parts, as one of the Yearly Meeting's Committee, was to be at this meeting this morning. I feel myself as a barren stock in comparison of some whose labours are so abundant and unceasing; but if only I am enabled to keep the word of the Lord's patience, and to occupy the place which He assigns me, I am well content that the more abundant honours should be put upon those who are called to larger spheres of usefulness.

'More careful not to serve Thee much, but to please Thee perfectly,' is the point at which I desire to aim."

"8th mo. 1852. We are now leaving home for a coasting voyage to Scotland, accompanied by our sister Mary Anna, in the hope that it may prove serviceable to her health, and my own also. What precious words are these, 'My times are in Thy hand.'"

"10th mo. 25th. I have on the whole been greatly benefitted by our late journey, or rather voyage. It afforded us, in addition to this advantage, the pleasure of a visit to our dear friends at Newcastle, and the enjoyment of a great deal of fine scenery, most of it new to us. The island of Skye in particular, will long retain a place in our remembrance; but how varied are the associations connected with it! The scenery is the grandest and most impressive of any we have seen in the British Islands; but whilst passing along in the quiet enjoyment of it, we were aroused as from a pleasant dream, by the affecting intelligence that our dear and honoured friend, Samuel Capper, had been removed by death. The sense of our great loss has been still more deeply felt on our return, and by myself in particular, in having to occupy the seat left vacant by him in our meetings. I had two companions as ministers on the men's side of the gallery when I came to Bristol,—now I sit alone. Doubtless there is a lesson of instruction conveyed to others, as well as to myself, by this circumstance. Oh for grace to enable us to profit by it! I do often feel, as if in a physical point of view, as well as in other respects, I was

incapable of discharging the call which I believe to exist for ministerial service in this meeting. Many times as we were passing along through the sequestered scenery of the Highland mountains, did I feel as if I could most gladly pitch my tent there, far away from that din and conflict of active life, which I have of late felt so unable to engage in. But again I was brought to feel that the only true rest and enjoyment afforded us in life, are to be known in the humble endeavour to do the will of our Divine Master, and to occupy the place which He assigns us. And weak and helpless as I am in every sense, I can yet count it a privilege if I may be made instrumental, in ever so small a degree, in encouraging my helpless fellow travellers to hold on their way, and to trust still in Him, who abideth faithful amid all the changes of this changing scene; and if further, it be given me to extend to those who are wandering far away from Him, the invitation to return and to be reconciled to God through the death of His Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"8th mo. 28th, 1853. On the 26th our sister Ann gave birth to a little girl, her first child, and both appear as yet to be doing well. May the blessing of the Great Giver rest upon the gift, and upon those on whom it is bestowed."

"20th of 7th mo. 1854. To-morrow we purpose leaving home for an absence of many weeks, including a voyage to Norway. Our plan was to have left Hull

to-morrow, but now the decease of dear Rachel Priestman, at Waterford (whilst engaged in a religious visit in Ireland), has induced us to delay the voyage for a week, in order that we may unite with the mourning company at Newcastle (whither the remains have been removed), in attending the interment. We expect to be afterwards joined by Matilda Sturge and our sister Mary Anna, as our companions in our voyage to Norway."

"9th mo. 11th, 1854. Once more I am permitted to resume this record. After an absence of seven weeks, we were permitted to return to our home two days since. For this and all the abounding mercies of our Heavenly Father towards us, do I desire to express my reverent and heartfelt thanks. The first week was spent as we anticipated, in the North of England, attending the interment of our dear friend, R. Priestman, &c. On the 26th of 7th mo. we were joined by our fellow travellers on our way to Hull, whence we sailed the next morning for Christiansand, landing there on the 29th, and proceeding thence to Christiania. From that port we returned again, in the latter part of the week, to Christiansand, and held a little meeting there on the Seventh-day evening, with two persons who make profession with us. From thence our course lay round the coast to Bergen, where we were met by Asbjorn Kloster and Reier Reirsen from Stavanger. The latter accompanied us in our excursion up the Sogne

Fiord to Lærdal, from thence up a branch of the Fiord to Gudvangen, (the scenery of which is the grandest of any we saw in Norway,) returning to Bergen by Vossevangen, Bolstadoren, &c. The remainder of our time in Norway was spent at Stavanger, and in exploring some of the beautiful fiords in that district.

The most interesting to me of all our recollections of Norway, are those which relate to our intercourse with our dear friends at Stavanger, where we attended several meetings for worship, all of which proved to be seasons of instruction, and of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Two other meetings which I attended, the one at Vass and the other at Bergen, with the few who are there, inclined to the views of Friends, were not without their interest, but it was at Stavanger more especially that we felt as if dwelling among our own people. And truly there is much which Friends in this land, might learn from them, as regards simple hearted devotedness to the Lord's service. One felt there, though on a small scale, a representation of what we may suppose the early condition of our Society in this country to have been, in many respects at least. No doubt the warm zeal of the recent converts may not be without its attendant dangers, but it is a refreshing thing to witness the 'kindness of their youth, and the love of their espousals.' May the Lord in His mercy condescend to watch over and preserve this little flock, and to bless the testimony

which they bear to His truth, to the good of many of those around them.

The case of one young man in particular interested us deeply. He was one of our boat's crew from Stavanger (five out of six of them being attenders of meetings), and interested us from the first, by the sweet expression of his countenance. On inquiring about him, we found that he had married a young widow, a Friend, who had lost her membership in consequence. He was for a time very much opposed to the views of Friends, and desirous that his wife should withdraw from them; but having now been himself brought under convincement, he has seen it right to refuse to go this summer on military service. He had only served a portion of a five years' period of such service, and is now in constant expectation of arrest. It seems that when he first became convinced of the anti-Christian character of war, he found great difficulty in making up his mind to endure the suffering in which his refusal to fight might involve him; but now his feeling is rather that of his unworthiness to suffer for the name of Christ. What his treatment may be, is still uncertain, but I earnestly hope that in the event of his being sent to prison, the remonstrances, which will no doubt be made by Friends in England to the king on his behalf, will be instrumental in preventing the execution of any extreme sentence which may be passed upon him. We returned home by way of Hamburg,

Hanover, Cologne, Coblentz, Mayence, Ostend and Dover, and are now enjoying the quiet settlement of home, at least as much as any of the scenes of grandeur and beauty through which we have passed."

"5th mo. 24th, 1855. My last entry refers to a visit to Norway, and now we are looking to proceed thither again, though in a different capacity. We have just returned from London, where I have been attending the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, for the purpose of laying before it a concern to pay a visit in Gospel love to Friends and others in some parts of Norway, for which I had before obtained certificates from our Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. The cordial unity and the Christian advice of my dear brethren and sisters have been alike precious to me, and I desire that I may remember them to my instruction and encouragement, when (if it be the Lord's will to permit it) I shall have entered on this distant field of labour. I was however reminded, whilst listening to an instructive flow of expression in the select Yearly Meeting, that after all, my commission must be held from Christ Himself. The concern to visit our dear friends in Norway arose in my mind while dwelling among them last year. Since then, the belief that I am called to such a service, has been tested by many doubts and fears, but since coming to the conclusion that my peace of mind was concerned in mentioning the subject to my friends, I have been enabled to

leave the result with a quiet, trustful feeling. For this, and for the ability now felt, to commit my way unto the Lord in simple faith, as regards the prosecution of this concern, I desire to bow in humble thankfulness before Him. I see but little as to the path before me, but I think I never before felt on leaving home on a long journey, so little of disquieting apprehension. This does not arise from a belief that we are likely to escape difficulty and trials, or from any idea of certainty that we shall be permitted to return to our beloved home and friends in safety, but rather from the conviction that we are in the hands of a compassionate Saviour, and may safely leave all to Him.*

* Previously to leaving home for religious service in Norway, William Tanner's journal reviews the forty years of his life, already passed away, and records his sentiments on several important topics connected with his Christian course and his position as a minister of the Gospel. We insert this, in the following chapter, before the record of his religious journey in Norway.

CHAPTER VII.

Reviews his past life—over-sensitiveness in childhood—sufferings consequent—Childish reception of Truth as taught by his parents in early years—Geo. Fox's Journal a favourite book—Further experience—must call no man master—Thoughts on evangelical views—on "election and perseverance"—on Christian unity—on verbal Inspiration as regards Holy Scripture—on the Atonement—Thoughts on the views and principles of Friends—Want of recognition of the gift of Teaching—On birth-right membership—On Baptism and the Supper.

"The past as well as the future, has been much before the view of my mind of late. I have lately completed forty years of life, and have been again reminded of the way by which the Lord had led me through the wilderness. Not only have I had to contrast His faithful love and kindness towards me, with my own short-comings and unfaithfulness, and to trace with thankfulness the gracious provision which has been made, and is still made, for all my wants, but also to consider my personal history in reference to the changes of feeling, opinion and character through which I have passed.

I think it may perhaps assist me in some future reviews of a like kind, if I now commit to paper some things connected with the latter considerations, which I may hitherto have mentioned imperfectly, if at all.

I am by no means disposed to place my recollections of childhood in such strong and favourable contrast with those which relate to succeeding years, as many poets and other writers do. The ideas of purity and innocence are not, in my case, associated with the former period, neither does the latter exclude enjoyments of a simple or even playful kind. It certainly has never cost me any uneasiness to observe how rapidly the hours of the day of life are passing over, except in so far as I have had occasion to regret that they have not been more profitably occupied. Childhood, like the early morning and the spring time of the year, has its peculiar charms; but to my own mind, there has always been something more attractive in the reposeful associations connected with the evening of the day, the autumn of the year, and the decline of life.

I do not think that this preference has its source in melancholy feeling, but it has doubtless been greatly increased by a disposition (in part produced by physical weakness), to shrink from the labours, the responsibilities, and the rough contact of the world. I think that the tendency to morbid action in my own mind, (and what mind is free from such a tendency?) is in the direction of over-sensitiveness. Great was the suffering which it caused me in early childhood,* and though its character has somewhat altered, it has continued to

* The fear of being left alone in the dark, and a constant dread of losing my dear mother, were among its earlier forms. I well remember begging her never to repeat to me again the beautiful lines of Cowper on the receipt of his mother's picture.

be a source of suffering and besetment. Merciful indeed has been the provision made for my weakness, in the wise care extended by the tenderest of mothers, in the days of early childhood, as well as since, and in later years in the affectionate sympathy of a beloved wife. I can also perceive that my Heavenly Father has dealt wisely with me, as respects some of the more painful parts of the discipline of life—in the trials which were connected with the earlier years of business, in the somewhat solitary position I have had of late to occupy in the Bristol gallery, and in other things connected with my membership and ministry in the Society of Friends, and the form which my opinions have assumed in matters of religion. Their earliest form was that of a child-like reception of all that was taught me by my parents, and by the ministry of Friends, and of all that I was able to understand of the truths revealed in Holy Scripture, and in the views expressed in the writings of the early Friends.

The journal of George Fox was one of my earliest favourites, and I believe I had nearly completed a second perusal of it before the years of childhood had passed over. There is much indeed in his simple and earnest modes of expression, which has in, later years, strongly commended itself to my mind, as contrasted with the more systematic and scholastic representations of truth, to be found in the writings of some of his contemporaries. To the period of childish trust there

succeeded one in which I sought to lay firmer hold on the truths which had been set before me, and to make them my own on the ground of conviction, rather than by taking them upon trust. That endeavour was attended in my case, as in that of many others, by the painful discovery, that some things to which I had fondly clung, must be given up, that the best of men were not infallible, and that both the past and present teaching of our religious society, had in it some mixture of human authority, and therefore of human error. It was given me then to feel that I must call no man "master" or "father," in a spiritual sense, and that the truth of Christ, revealed in Holy Scripture, and applied by His Spirit to the heart, must be my only standard. I am far indeed from thinking that all the conclusions to which I was led at the period to which I refer, were correct.

There succeeded to it a time of still greater shaking, in which I became dissatisfied with much that is associated with the views which are commonly described as 'evangelical.' The claims which are often set up on behalf of the Holy Scriptures, in regard to the extent to which they are to be understood as inspired, appeared to me to be wholly untenable. Neither could I at all subscribe to the indiscriminate manner in which fallen human nature is censured, as if it were destitute of all that good which the Great Creator had in the first instance bestowed on man, or to the belief that it is in the power

of man to draw the line by which saints are separated from sinners. The doctrines of 'election' and 'perseverance,' as set forth by Calvinistic writers, appeared, as indeed they always have done of later years, at variance with the essential characteristics of the Gospel. It was often a subject of anxious and painful thought, as to how much of religious truth would remain, when I had given up all that failed to commend itself to my mind and conscience; but through all the alternations of doubt and unbelief, a humble faith remained in the great and most precious truth, that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself,' and that He does still condescend to visit the hearts of the children of men, by the power of His Spirit, contriting them before Him, and drawing them nearer to Himself.

It would be presumptuous in me to suppose after all the changes of opinion which have been thus witnessed, that I have even now reached the point at which no further change will be known: but I have abundant cause for gratitude for the degree of quiet settlement which has of late been witnessed, both in regard to the great truths of Christianity, and to the manner in which they are held by the Society of which I am a member. I do not doubt that I should be subjected to the charge of heterodoxy, by many zealous defenders of both, were I to publish to the world some of the misgivings to which I have referred, and which

time and thought have only served to strengthen. If, however, I am correct in the view which I take of the nature of Christian unity, it is not the design of Him, who knows what is in man, that all should be brought to see eye to eye, in the present imperfect state of existence; but rather that our differences of opinion should be to us an occasion of mutual forbearance, and that whilst each should seek after an increasing conformity to the mind that was in Christ, we should, as much as possible, abstain from requiring others to conform to our own standard of opinion.

I have many times felt it to be a delicate thing to decide, how far it is incumbent upon me to communicate my views on some of these doubtful questions to others. I have felt that it would be the means of inducing useless controversy, if all the members of a religious society were to obtrude their peculiar views on the notice of the body; that it is to be presumed that great differences of opinion necessarily exist, and that unless when truth and honesty require the avowal of such to be made, it is better for the members of a church to confine their communications with each other, as much as may be, to things they hold in common. On the other hand, I have sometimes feared that there is amongst us an undue shrinking from making such an avowal, when it is really called for; and I do not feel, whilst thus tracing the lines of my past and present experience, as

if I ought to omit explanations, to which I may profitably recur, and which may hereafter serve for the encouragement of some, who, like myself, may be able to lay but weak and trembling hold on the truth which they profess. With this view I incline distinctly to state some of the conclusions, to which former conflicts of opinion have conducted me.

And first, with regard to things which are the common concern of all true Christians. I now no longer feel any uneasiness in the admission, which appears to me inevitable, that the claims to verbal inspiration cannot be maintained on behalf of the Holy Scriptures, as a whole. They nowhere make such a claim on their own behalf: and it is moreover simply impossible that they should—unless by a miracle wrought in the case of each reader—constitute a verbal revelation from God to man.* I believe that the Scriptures contain a record of succeeding revelations, and that their writers were divinely inspired, in regard to the truths which they had to make known for our acceptance. And this, as it seems to me, is all that can be looked for in regard to them. There is another necessity, which has not perhaps been sufficiently borne in mind, viz. that of our being instructed in heavenly things, by the use of earthly figures, and of forms of

* How different is the construction which any number of men would put on any form of words set before them, to say nothing of errors which would arise in copying and translating!

speech relating to human intercourse. Thus we find the operations of the Divine Mind, spoken of in Scripture, in terms by which we are wont to describe our own thoughts and feelings. It is, in reality, the only means by which we can approach the subject: but it does certainly behove us to be on our guard against carrying comparison too far, between the finite and the infinite.

In reference to the atonement, made upon the cross for sin, it certainly seems to me to be set before us as a means whereby the Father of Mercies might show himself just, and at the same time the justifier of unjust man. But if not satisfied with this, it is attempted to be shown that He needed to have His wrath appeased, as man would, in the case of those who had injured him, I think we should adopt a representation, which, whilst it would be at variance with the authority of Scripture, would fail to commend itself to the mind of man. It does appear to me, that almost infinite mischief has been produced by the attempts which man has made, to impose his own construction of the sacred text.

Now with regard to the views and principles of the Society of Friends. I rejoice in believing that we have, to a large extent, escaped from the trammels of human authority: and I believe all that is wanting to us as a church is, that that which remains amongst us, as such authority, should give place to the authority of Christ.

I believe that our society was called, and is still called, to testify to the authority of Christ in the church, to the immediate teaching and government of His Spirit, to the freedom of Gospel ministry, to the entire spirituality of the new covenant, to simplicity of life and conversation, and to a more implicit obedience to the precepts of Christ, in relation to the ordinary duties of life (abstinence from war and oaths for instance).

But I think we have sometimes run counter to the freedom of the Gospel—when we have attempted to define the manner in which such testimonies should be maintained,—when those of us who have exercised the gift of the ministry, have undertaken, to too great an extent, to define the mind of the Spirit in relation to individuals, instead of directing them simply to its teaching—when the writings of individuals have been referred to as authoritative standards of the truth, and as such, have been published at the expense of the Society—when simplicity and truthfulness, have been tested by the reception or rejection of certain forms of dress and speech, about some of which there is room for a conscientious difference of opinion—and when we have counted as offenders, those who have, in any way, seen it right to take a different course from that of their brethren, whilst in regard to the *grounds* of those testimonies, they have been at one with them.

As regards dress and address, it is incumbent upon parents to bring up children in accordance with that

which they feel to be right; but when young persons reach the age at which they are capable of forming a judgment, I would have them directed to the dictates of their own consciences. Let them be reminded that conscience itself needs, like the other powers of the mind, to be subjected to the enlightening power of the Spirit of Christ; that until this has been experienced, its dictates cannot be fully trusted to, and that many things seem 'right unto a man, the end whereof are the ways of death.' The experience of those, who have trodden the path of life before them, may fairly be referred to, as fraught with instruction; but how important is it that we should, in no wise, attempt to make one man's convictions, the rule for another's guidance.

Such a distinction as that for which I contend, between holding a testimony, and supporting it in the same manner as others, was made by our early friends, in regard to oaths. I shall never forget the impressive communication, made some years since, by Samuel Tuke, to the Yearly Meeting, when the subject of the schisms in the American Yearly Meetings was before it. He pointed out, on that occasion, in the clearest manner, that Christian unity does not so much consist in bringing men to see eye to eye, as in their being prepared to bear with one another in their differences; and referred for illustration to the differences of opinion which existed among the apostles themselves, and then to the

difficulty in which our early Friends were placed, (I think he said for nearly forty years,) in reference to oaths: the first form of affirmation provided by the legislature, for the use of Friends, having been one, which many of them considered as being in effect an oath. He pointed out that Friends, at that time, were willing to bear with one another in their differences, and that after a time, the cause of difficulty was removed.

Most of the points to which I have referred, in relation to the extent to which my own views differ from those of my brethren, relate to practice rather than to the constitution or the recorded principles of the society: but there is one thing which has long appeared to me in the light of a deficiency in our church economy. I allude to our having failed to recognise the gift of public teaching. I have no doubt that in the early days of our Society, there was such an abounding of ministerial gifts, as rendered any other means of public teaching, comparatively useless; but the day is come in which, from a variety of causes, there is a lack of ministry. All with whom I have conversed on the subject, are ready to admit that if things were in a healthy condition amongst us, there would be many fewer instances than there are, of Meetings being held from month to month in silence. Now, I fully admit that it would be worse than useless to attempt to supply the deficiency by a system of mere human teaching. But was there not a gift of teaching

recognised in the early church, as distinguished from prophesying? There have been instances among us, in which Friends in the station of Elder, have exercised the liberty of speaking to edification in our Meetings, in a character, distinct from that of Ministers. Why should not such service be distinctly recognised and encouraged? There is another point upon which, as connected with ministry, I have often felt great anxiety, and that is, that seriously minded young persons should not be turned aside, either by their own feelings or by their friends, from exercising gifts which may be bestowed upon them, on the ground of their inability to receive all the representations of truth made to them by their brethren (whether in regard to the nature of the ministerial gift, or otherwise), or to conform in all things to their standard.

I may here say a few words on a subject, in regard to which I once thought the Society of Friends in error, but about which I now believe their views to be correct, that of birth-right membership. It is impossible, indeed, to deny that which has been often alleged, that our present practice results in our being a mixed multitude, that the converted and the unconverted, the convinced and the unconvinced, find place amongst us: but was there ever a church from the days of the apostles downwards, to which this did not more or less apply? Have we any reason to think that the apostles themselves undertook to separate

the living members of the church, from the mere professors, in so far as admission to the church was concerned? We know that they admitted unworthy members, and their practice would seem to me to have been, to admit those who professed faith in Christ, and to exclude such, as were afterwards proved by their conduct to be unworthy.

There is nothing which can, I think, be certainly gathered as to the course pursued in reference to the children of believers; but I do not see why they should have been excluded from any of the privileges of instruction and oversight, which their parents enjoyed, if the admission were freely made, that the limits of the professing church were not to be regarded as coinciding with those of the true church; the latter being considered as including all, and only those, who are baptized by the Spirit of Christ, and the former, as an association of those who profess faith in Him. Supposing this view to be correct, I am not prepared to say how far it should influence the practice of existing churches, as respects the admission of adults into membership, now that the professing church has divided itself into various sections, each giving prominence to some particular view of Divine truth. But I believe that the less we attempt to exercise a power, which does not appear to have been conferred on the apostles themselves, that of deciding

who are, and who are not, living members of the church of Christ, the better.

As respects the so called ordinances of Baptism and the Supper, I believe, with the Society of Friends, that they are no ordinances at all, and that in giving a spiritual direction to the Jewish ordinance of the Passover, and in adopting the outward sign of admission by baptism, which had been in use by the Jews, we have no reason to think that our Lord designed to incorporate these things into that spiritual economy, which so greatly distinguished the new covenant and dispensation. I believe there have been some, who whilst admitting this, have nevertheless felt bound, in all simplicity, to render a literal obedience to the Saviour's words; and I can by no means admit that in the case of any of our members, who pursue such a course, there is any thing to warrant our dealing with them, or cutting them off.* But I do feel that the prevailing abuse of these things in the professing church, and the superstitious feelings with which they are regarded by multitudes of its members, afford grounds for their disuse, even stronger than the necessity which existed in days of old, for

* I have lately received from a friend, the following extract from Thomas Chalkley's Journal:—"And further, I never understood that any of our Society were absolutely against such practising of it, (Baptism) who could see no further, or did really think in their consciences, it was their duty to do so."

the destruction of the brazen serpent which Moses had made.

I believe that I seldom or never enter on the consideration of controverted questions of religious truth, without being brought to feel how unspeakably blessed is the prospect set before us, of a state in which we may see as we are seen, and know as we are known, and in which all names and distinctions shall for ever give place to the Name of Him who declares "I am He that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore,"—and when the great distinction shall be, that of having known our robes to be 'washed and made white' in His most precious blood."

CHAPTER VIII.

Religious visit to Norway—land at Christiansand—beauty of the coast—Increase in the number of Friends—W. T. attends various Meetings—Ferns and Flowers—Favoured Meetings amidst outward difficulties—Longevity amidst toil, and hardship, and abstinence from intoxicating drinks — Priestly opposition — Farmer's hospitality—a lovely dwelling place—a memorable Meeting—conclude a boating voyage of 160 miles.

We have noticed at page 74, that William Tanner had obtained the needful unity and sanction of his friends in reference to a religious visit to Friends and others in Norway. In this service he had the company of his wife, who cheered and comforted him in the journey, and aided him by participating in his religious exercises and labours.

They sailed from London on the 6th of the 6th month, 1855, and landed at Christiansand on the 11th. In the evening they called at Jorgen Kundson's, but he was not at home. The little meeting there does not appear to have been kept up since C. Meland left for America last summer.

"6th mo. 12th. Sailed at 3 A.M. The vessel called at Moudal, Forsund, Flekkefiord and Ekersund. I think we were quite as much struck as last year with

the exceeding beauty of some of these little settlements along the coast, or rather with that of the dark rocks and calm clear water among which they are situated. There is an air of repose over all these places, which is very attractive to a weary traveller. We did not reach Stavanger till about eleven at night, but there was light enough to distinguish among the numerous boats that came off, the one containing our friends, E. Dahl, A. Kloster, Reir Reirsen, P. Dunde's father, &c. Our friends (for such we truly feel them to be), conducted us to Endre Dahl's, where we have rooms as clean and airy as we could desire; and the day closed with a feeling of thankful acknowledgment of the preserving care extended towards us.

6th mo. 13th. I have had a good deal of conversation with E. Dahl and others in reference to our own arrangements, to Bible Society matters, and the affairs of our little church in this place. We have had a call this morning from Matthias Matthiason, who was imprisoned last year for refusing to go out on military service, and there is no one here whom I have been more rejoiced to meet again. The expression of his countenance is as good as a sermon to me. He is very desirous of being one of our boatmen up the fiords, but is not sure whether he can leave his wife who is unwell. I am very glad to find that he is not likely to have any further trouble in regard to military service. The regiment to which he belongs has not been called out

this year, and his period of service will have expired before they are again called from home. There is another young man in this neighbourhood, who has this year undergone a similar punishment.

There is a steady increase in the number of Friends here, and a still larger increase in the attendance of Meetings. I think the usual number present, is from 150 to 180. We were present this evening at the usual weekly reading meeting, at which some fifty persons were present. A. Kloster read some extracts from Samuel Capper's Memoir, which we brought with us.

14th. Week-day meeting at Stavanger; a good attendance of Friends. Elias Tasted and Endre Dahl sat on one side of me, and Asbjorn Kloster on the other. Having occasion for the assistance of the latter in the capacity of interpreter, it was a great relief to me to find that we could work together without difficulty. I was reminded of what Eli Jones said, 'I felt, when he began to interpret, that I had a strong man beside me.' E. Tasted told me after meeting, that he thought when taking leave of us last year, that I should have to come again. His remark to A. Kloster was, 'we have got our annual friend come back to us again.' It was very pleasant to find from Endre Dahl this morning, that he did not feel easy without accompanying us part of the time at least. Reir Reirsen is also of the party, so we have the three interpreters with us.

A fresh breeze sprung up, which carried us quickly

across to Finno. The meeting was appointed to be held in a room in the farmhouse of Ole Kegelstadt, the only member of our society who lives on the island. The slowness with which Norwegian meetings gather (which is partly caused by the want of clocks and watches), is rather exercising to impatient spirits. After waiting for about two hours—we were as much too early as some others were too late—the room was well filled. I did not feel as though I had much to say when I stood up, but more seemed given as I proceeded, and the people were very serious and attentive. E. Dahl and A. Kloster also spoke. It was trying not to be able to follow them. Their service seemed to find place with the meeting.

6th day morning, 15th. We had a fine run across to another island (Stjenners), where there is a little meeting held. On our way, we passed one of the friends in a boat, going round to gather up his neighbours to bring them to the meeting, which seemed somewhat like compelling them to come in. The circumstances of the people were not however favourable to a large attendance. A. Kloster interpreted for me. We had a rich treat in the view of the surrounding scenery, as we walked from and to the boat. The island is beautifully intersected by the blue waves of the Fiord, which are seen also between it and other islands, and again between these and the dark mountains beyond."

A seven hour's voyage to Sand, three of it in rain, brought the little party thither, very weary, soon after ten in the evening.

7th day, 6th mo. 16th. Not suiting for a meeting they pushed on to Sonde, to return for one next evening.

"It is very difficult to me to attend two meetings in the day, but there is no help for it; our friends had to row again, most of the way; but we have now a sixth with us, Daniel Danielson, who went before us in the first instance, giving notice of the meetings. Most of the voyage this morning was new to us, and we were very much struck with the scenery about Soöde, which lies at the extremity of the Fiord, and at the foot of a mountain, down the sides of which the snow still extends a long distance. We did not feel at all sure of being taken in at the house of entertainment, for the priest who comes to visit his flock, once in three weeks, makes it his home whilst he remains, and had he been there, he would probably have deprived us of our quarters, as well as of a part of our congregation to-morrow. Happily, we found the coast quite clear in this respect, and our quarters proved clean and decent.

The neighbourhood is a very attractive one. I found some old friends among the Ferns and Flowers, and some new acquaintance amongst the latter. Lilies of the Valley, the Bog-bean, &c. were flowering in rich

profusion. It had been arranged to meet the little company of friends this evening, and to hold a public meeting in the morning in a large barn. Dear S. having taken cold, found it needful to keep within, so I set out with A. Kloster, to join our friends. He too has taken cold, and lost his voice, and I was glad to have R. Reirsen to fall back upon, as an interpreter in the little I had to say to the poor people whom we found assembled; some twenty perhaps in all. Our place of meeting was a room in a little wooden dwelling of one of the friends, situated on the mountain side. The view of the upper part of the Fiord, which appears like a lake surrounded on all sides by high mountains, was most striking from this spot, and the sound of neighbouring waterfalls was distinctly heard as we sat in meeting. E. Dahl and A. Kloster had both something to say to these dear people, and I trust we were comforted and refreshed together.

1st day, the 17th. We had a laborious, and in some respects, an exercising day, but one which will be long remembered for the gracious assistance granted us. The morning proved very wet, and neither of us seemed much in condition for encountering even an ordinary amount of fatigue. However we set off after breakfast. After being rowed some distance in a boat, we had to make our way, in pouring rain, up a slippery hill-side. The company had already begun to collect, and notwithstanding the state of the weather, these

hardy mountaineers came flocking in, dripping wet, and sat as quietly down, as if they had all been Friends; there were I think, as many as two hundred, collected in a part of the barn which had been supplied with planks, and a few seats: and a low wooden division served for a gallery-rail for the speakers. E. Dahl said a few words soon after the meeting was gathered, and R. Reirsen afterwards acted as my interpreter very satisfactorily. I had to speak at length on the freeness and fulness of the Gospel message, and on the nature of spiritual worship, and to press on the people the importance of their obtaining, and making themselves acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and of seeking for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, instead of looking unto man for help. E. Dahl afterwards spoke with great fluency and earnestness, and I followed with the voice of prayer. Although the meeting held for two hours and a quarter, the people seemed in no haste to leave.

The poor people at Sövde have suffered much from the unusual severity of the frost; and when the ice broke up in the Fiord, it was for some time impassable, and they had great difficulty in obtaining food enough to support life. Ole Sangersund, an old man, whom we saw at Sand last year, came up from thence, with two others, in a boat, this morning, to the meeting, a distance of twelve miles, and we passed him in returning, with only one companion, rowing back to Sand. He is eighty years of age, and has spent most of his life in travelling over

the country selling articles in which he deals; he has not known what it was to sleep in a bed for a great part of his life, and has taken no intoxicating liquor for the last thirty years.

We reached Sand in time to get a cup of tea and some rest before the meeting there, and felt more fit to go to bed than to attend it. It was largely attended; we had people behind and on each side of us, and there was hardly light enough to see many of them. However it proved a solemn and good meeting. E. Dahl and Reir both interpreted for me, the former when I knelt down, and the latter when I rose to speak; E. Dahl was also engaged, at some length, on his own account. We were made thankful when the day closed, in having been enabled to accomplish what seemed called for at our hands.

2nd day, 6th mo. 18th. Returned to Jælse. The landlord of our inn would have let us have a room for the meeting, but that the Priest had given a strict charge to his people not to allow Friends a place to meet in. A farmer, who lives near, had however resolved to disobey his orders, and offered his barn; but thinking afterwards that this was not sufficiently good for the purpose, he had seats brought into one of the sitting rooms.

3rd day, the 19th. At Erfiord, a distance of ten miles, a new farm house, situated in one of the loveliest spots we have visited, was kindly furnished us for the

meeting, which was attended by from sixty to eighty persons, many of them apparently in comfortable circumstances. Six children in arms were brought by their mothers, and it was sometimes a question whether the voice of the preacher, or those of the babies would prevail. On the whole, however, they were kept wonderfully quiet, and we had a solemn season together, wherein I believe some hearts were prepared to accept the truth in the love of it. E. Dahl and A. Kloster had both some public service, and the meeting held for a long time. One man, who was convinced of our principles, at a meeting held here, by E. and S. Jones, has separated himself from the public worship of the Lutheran Church, and his wife seems like-minded with him.

4th day, 6th mo. 20th. We had a fine sail this morning to Rando, a curious little settlement, where, in a small wooden dwelling, a Friend and his wife reside, patterns of neatness and humble competence. A few of the neighbours came in to sit down with us, and we were refreshed together. From thence we were rowed to another little settlement of Friends. A steep climb of many hundred feet, brought us to a farm house, standing upon a ridge, between the Fiord and a fresh-water lake, commanding a view of the Fiord and its islands, from Stavanger on the south, to the mountains which bound the northern shores. I do not know that I ever before saw so

lovely a dwelling place. I had no idea that the attendance of these little meetings, would have introduced us to so much fine scenery. I believe I shall never forget this place: but that for which it will be most memorable, is the solemnity of the meeting held that evening in the farmer's room. It was densely crowded and oppressively hot, but to my feeling, and others shared it with me, we have had no such meeting as that. It closed about ten o'clock, and the subdued light of the sun, which had just set, resting on the still waters of the Fiord, seemed in harmony with the deep and solemn silence, under which we had separated. My own voice would have been scarcely audible during the latter part of this meeting, but Reir's was well maintained, and he appears to have performed his part well in all respects. I did not feel satisfied at the close, without appointing another, at a place two miles off, and there we repaired the next morning.

5th day, 21st. Many who had been with us the evening before, and many who had not, were assembled in a house belonging to a Friend; and though it was in some respects a less striking meeting than the former, there was great tenderness of spirit among the people. E. Dahl spoke shortly after I sat down, and I believe that united access to the throne of grace was granted us towards the close.

Our experiences in these meetings have been of a very varied character, as the service has also been; but the

prevailing concern with me, in most of them, has been to preach Christ, as the Redeemer, Sanctifier and Teacher, of all who come to Him in living faith, and to call the people away from a dependance on outward forms, and priestly mediation, to an experimental acquaintance with the Saviour's power and love.

After dinner we came direct to Stavanger, and were not a little refreshed to find ourselves once more under Maria Dahl's motherly care. Her husband has been a great help and comfort to us throughout this boating voyage of 150 or 160 miles; he seems equally at home in rowing a boat, preparing a meal, arranging for a meeting, interpreting for others, or preaching himself. It is very cheering to find a native, and I trust a living ministry, springing up here, and it must, no doubt, be more calculated to be helpful in many respects, than the occasional services of foreigners. At the present time, I do however feel that the fields are white to harvest, and the labourers few; and as regards my own feeble efforts, I have hitherto felt as if the opening for them was widening rather than closing."

CHAPTER IX.

Yearly Meeting at Stavanger—charge of the poor—education of children—marriage regulations—leave Stavanger for the north by boat—accident to W. Tanner—rests—resumes his journey—Exemplary blind woman—meet another sufferer for refusing military service—difficult journey—precipices and waterfalls—Pine forests—Linnæa Borealis in flower—Meeting at Vossevangen—Thermometer at 84°—travel by night to avoid the heat—steamer to Tromsoe—English travellers.

"6th mo. 22nd. To-morrow is the Yearly Meeting. T. Roisland, a Friend, who speaks as a minister in their meetings, has arrived with his daughter, from Quinnesdal near Flekkefiord, to attend it, having walked the whole distance, 98 miles, in two days, with the exception of the last seven miles.

7th day, 23rd. The meeting for worship this morning was an open time. I had to speak on the blessedness of dwelling together in unity, and of being quickened together with Christ, and raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, &c. E. Dahl read my Certificate at the close of the meeting, and after those not members had withdrawn, he opened the Meeting for Discipline, by reading the names of those present, and the meeting then adjourned till the afternoon. It was very pleasant, in looking over

the meeting, to recognise the countenances of many whom we had visited in their solitary dwelling places. In the course of the business in the afternoon, I ventured to express the hope, that Friends would be very cautious how they multiplied rules, and that they would avoid copying English rules, which might not be suited to their circumstances, or which did not commend themselves to their consciences: that as the little society here has been raised up and kept together, with very little of human instrumentality, it is above all things important they should follow the guidance of the same good hand, which has led them hitherto.

The appointment of overseers came next, and the two men and two women Friends before in office, were continued; other Friends were appointed to have the care and oversight of the poor. Then followed the consideration of the Sufferings of Friends, consequent on their refusal to serve in the army, or to pay ecclesiastical demands. The instruction of Friends' children next claimed a good deal of attention. It is at present deficient in the town, and much more so in the country; many Friends in this neighbourhood cannot well afford to pay the charge at A. Kloster's school, small as that is, and they cannot send them to the government schools, where they would have to learn the Lutheran catechism. Those who live in the country, have to be dependant on a travelling schoolmaster, who stays a few weeks in a place and passes on. Some Friends appeared very

desirous that something more should be done, but others appeared to take a very limited view of educational requirement, and considered that Friends might teach their own children to read, and that this was the chief requisite in the country. I endeavoured to point out to Friends, how important a bearing education had on the future welfare of the Society here—that most of the present members have come in on the ground of convincement; that many of them must be aware how much loss they have suffered for want of a guarded and religious education, and that as their children have a birthright membership, the future condition of the body will be greatly affected by the kind of training to which they are subjected.

A discussion of considerable length followed on the subject of first cousins' marriages. A case is pending in which the parties were ignorant of the English rules. There is no rule respecting it in the Norwegian book, and it was thought best to bring the question of adopting such a rule, before the meeting. One friend (R. Reirsen) inquired whether there was any Scripture authority for such a rule. I did not intend to say anything on the subject, but as some Friends seemed desirous of knowing the views of Friends in England, about this question, I mentioned that the ground of objection stated, in our rules of discipline, was not that such connections were forbidden in Scripture, but that they were in themselves undesirable, &c.; and that

whilst I did not incline to express any opinion of my own upon the above question, I thought it was one which they should consider and decide for themselves. The subject was eventually referred to the consideration of the two months' meeting. Then came the question of whether the poor friends, whose case had given rise to the discussion, should be allowed to marry; some of the more conservative members of the meeting wished it postponed, until the main question was decided; but the Endre Dahls of the community were clearly of the judgment, that whatever the decision of the meeting might be, as to the adoption of the rule which exists in England, these Friends should be allowed to proceed, seeing that no such rule has yet been adopted in Norway; that the Friends in question had become engaged to each other before they knew of the English rule, and a case had already occurred in which first cousins had been married. The parties to the present suit were allowed to proceed accordingly.

When the business was pretty much disposed of, I mentioned to Friends the importance of promoting the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, of being diligent in the personal and family reading of them, and of the habit of a daily season of retirement before the Lord.

1st day, 6th mo. 24th. We have had crowded and very solemn meetings. I find I must look to rest quietly to-morrow, having exhausted my little stock of strength. We are both remarkably well, all things considered,

and have never been too tired to sleep, since coming to Norway, as so often happens at home. I believe that having been so much in the open air in boats, when we have nothing to do, but to sit still, has had a good deal to do with this beneficial result; but I desire also, and above all, to recognise the hand of help graciously extended to us from day to day, by our Father in Heaven.

3rd day, 26th. We have spent most of the day in Stunvag Island, where many of the Stavanger members reside. Several sick persons had also to be seen, one of these was a poor man afflicted with leprosy. It is a trying thing either to look upon him, or stand near him, but his affliction has been blest to him. We afterwards held a satisfactory meeting with the inhabitants, T. Roisland taking part in the ministry.

5th day, 28th. The Norge steamer being delayed, no choice seems left us but to defer our northern voyage for a fortnight, and to proceed northward again by boat, in order to try and reach some of the places which we had intended to take in coming from Bergen on our return. Endre Dahl has most kindly arranged, though at short notice, to go with us again; A. Kloster, M. Matthieson and two others, being also with us. Not being able to leave Stavanger before four o'clock, we could not well get beyond Star Island that night. The evening was beautifully calm, and many of the inhabitants were on the heights around, watching for fish.

I do not think that the rich hues of the sky, which we saw reflected in those still waters, could well be exceeded in point of beauty, in Italy itself.

6th day, 6th mo. 29th. We had to be astir early this morning, having to pass our old lodging places, Jælse and Sand, and to pass up the Hyls Fiord, which we visited last year, to a station beyond at the foot of the mountain which lies between us and Röldal. We reached Hyl about four o'clock in the afternoon. The Fiord becomes very narrow, with perpendicular cliffs, of perhaps a thousand feet, at the extreme point where the houses stand, and in the rocky ravine beyond, narrower still. I certainly did not expect to visit this deep defile again, but it afforded us both great pleasure, in spite of the heat, which was here very oppressive. We had on the present occasion to traverse its entire length. The path winds between the immense blocks of granite which have been hurled down from the cliffs above; and after following the stream for perhaps a mile and a half, we reached the little tarn from which it flows, surrounded on all sides by towering crags; then passing up the side of one of these, we looked down on the tarn itself, with its mirrored representation of the cliffs above. Then by an opening between the hills, we passed suddenly from this lovely valley into another, from the height above which, we beheld a portion of another lake, the Suledals-Vand, fifteen miles in length.

We were making our way down a steep path to its shores, when my feet slipped, and I got a heavy fall, which, together with the previous fatigue, produced faintness, and I should have fallen again, if I had not quickly betaken myself to the ground. The rest of our party had gone on, leaving dear S. and me to pursue our path alone, as we sometimes prefer to do. I was very sorry for the position in which she was placed; but a stalwart Norwegian passing by at the time, helped me to rise, and move on slowly, whilst dear S. went forward to ask for water. I was not only sorry to have caused such a commotion, but also to find that I must give up the idea of going further. We were glad to accept the hospitality offered at the house of the farmer.

The night was a very disturbed one, the feeling of faintness having returned; but when morning came (7th day), it seemed best to cross the lake. We found horses there in waiting for the mountain, and it was the most perplexing question we have had to decide since leaving home, whether to go on or not. The chances were, that I should be made absolutely ill by going on, and yet to have come thus far on our way, and to turn aside from visiting a little company, in whom I feel a special interest, was very exercising. The conclusion was at length arrived at, that E. Dahl and another Friend should go forward and attend the meeting at Röldal in the morning, and that we should

rest here all day, go to bed very early, and get up early to-morrow morning, in case of feeling well enough, so as to ascend the mountain in the cool of the morning, and reach Röldal in time for a long rest before the evening meeting.

There is a remarkable absence of squalid poverty among the people here; no doubt they make a little serve, but they, most of them, look strong and healthy, and the amount of fresh air they get out of doors, seems to make up for the want of it in their houses. Like many other things which are bestowed in the greatest abundance, the fine air and clear water, which so abound in this country, are regarded by the inhabitants as of little worth.

1st day, 7th mo. 9th, 1855. From causes which need not be explained, I had scarcely had any sleep when Asbjorn Kloster came at three o'clock, and told us that a messenger had been sent by E. Dahl, with a note to say, that he regarded it as a very serious thing for us to attempt the crossing of the mountains, that he found the snow, of which several miles had to be crossed, in a melting state—that if we should incline to make the attempt, some of the Friends were quite willing to go up and take us in a sledge part of the way, and carry us across other parts. We felt, however, that apart from the difficulty to ourselves, this would be taking them from their morning meeting, and giving them more trouble, than

coming down here, to meet us to-morrow morning, as E. Dahl had before suggested they might do.

The family of our landlord came in, to be present at our morning reading; after which some of our companions being engaged in arranging for a public meeting in the afternoon, we were glad to take shelter from the heat in a deep ravine above the village, through which the waters from the melting snows above, rushed in a foaming torrent to the lake. We were reminded of what is said of the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land," and of the "cool flowing waters which come from another place."

This is one of the numerous places in Norway where the priest comes only once in two or three weeks, and this not being the week for his visit, we had most of the people of the village collected in a large room, which was kindly lent us for the purpose, and very quiet and attentive they were.

2nd day, 7th mo. 2nd. The Friends from Röldal arrived soon after breakfast. There were five men, five women, and a number of lads. A blind woman, one of the first who joined Friends in that neighbourhood, had been led across the mountains, by her companions, lying down on the damp ground to rest by the way; so we were beaten in the race by the blind. They were remarkable looking people, dressed in the costume in use among the peasants in this district—the women wearing blue cloth caps trimmed with yellow, worked

stomachers, &c. They, especially, had bright intelligent countenances. Among the men was Knied Botn, also one of the first to join Friends there, and who is now frequently heard in their meetings as a minister. I could not help querying (as I afterwards told them) when we sat down together, "Who am I, and what have I to offer, that you should have been invited to come hither to meet us." However it seemed as if some ability was given to speak of Him who fed the multitudes of old, blessing the bread which the disciples handed to the people. We had a long and solemn meeting, and I believe we separated one from another as brethren and sisters in Christ. I did certainly feel as if those I most wanted to see were there, and as if, after all our doubtings and plannings, the mountain had been brought to us, instead of our going to it. The blind Friend, in particular, interested us, by the cheerful, lively expression of her countenance. She is partly dependant on public support; but E. Dahl thinks that all she gets in that way, does not amount to more than two or three dollars a year! with this she buys wool and knits stockings for sale. She often devotes time to hearing the children read in the Bible, being so well versed in it, that she can correct them, if they read wrong. It would, to be sure, have been very interesting to have visited this remarkable little settlement, but I am now fully satisfied with the course pursued in reference to it.

3rd day, 7th mo. 3rd. We crossed the Fiord this morning, from Sand to Nessa, where two women Friends reside, who have held a regular meeting for many years. We met about one hundred of their neighbours with them in the evening, and had, I trust, a good meeting.

4th day, 7th mo. 4th. We parted from our friend E. Dahl, who was about to leave for home, when we set forward towards a place in the neighbourhood of Staglands (where a Friend of that name resides), at which a meeting had been appointed for four o'clock this afternoon. It was the most trying meeting we have had as regards interruptions from children within, and dogs without, but I think it proved, in other respects, one of the most satisfactory. At its conclusion, we left for a point on the northern extremity of the Bukn Fiord, to which, with its numerous branches, our boating voyages have been hitherto confined. We have with us a young man of the Stagland family, who has been imprisoned at Bergen this year, for refusing to join the army; and it was very interesting to see him and M. Matthieson, who had been confined in the same cell last year, rowing the boat together. After walking across a neck of land which separates the two Fiords, we reached the southern extremity of the Hardanger, up which we have now to pass.

5th day, 7th mo. 5th. We parted with regret from M. Matthieson, and another Friend from Stavanger, who

are returning with the boat. Young Stagland and some others, whom we have hired with another boat, go with us up the Hardanger, and Daniel Danielsen goes also to assist in rowing, giving notice of public meetings, &c. A. Kloster being our interpreter.

7th mo. 5th. Some of the mountain masses, seen from the Hardanger are very grand. We had occasional glimpses of the Folgefond, but we could not be sure that we distinguished its glacier. On the whole, we greatly prefer the Gudvangen scenery to that of the Hardanger.

7th day, 7th mo. 7th. After landing at Graven, and getting some meat for dinner, the first we have had for ten days, we set out for Vossevangen. We were first rowed for three miles, and had then a journey of fourteen miles, in little carts, such as are used in this part of Norway for the conveyance of either people or goods, our horses being very poor ones. We had a very long ascent at first, the road passing between precipices of gneiss rock, and beside several waterfalls. The descent towards Vossevangen was more gradual. There was a delicious fragrance in the air, as we passed through a succession of Pine woods, and the ground was carpeted with the Cranberry plant, the Linnæa Borealis, &c. in full flower. We have seldom been more tired than when we reached this place, but I believe we were all truly thankful to have accomplished the journey in good time. There had been some doubt as to whether

it would have been reached by First-day at all. Our object in coming here was to visit the few Friends who reside at Voss, about three miles from hence; but as we rode along last evening, my attention was turned towards the inhabitants of Vossevangen itself, and we concluded to invite them to a public meeting this evening; it was appointed for six o'clock. We were rather low in the prospect of this meeting. A. Kloster had heard that the former meetings had been overcrowded, and disturbed in consequence: D. Danielsen reported that the people did not seem inclined to attend; and I had misgivings of my own. The heat of the weather made us all feel languid. (Thermometer 84° in our room).

During the solemn silence which prevailed, however, our fears were dissipated. I have not seen so many thoughtful and intelligent-looking men in any of the former public meetings; they gave the most respectful attention to what we had to communicate, and many expressed the hope to A. Kloster afterwards, that we would remain, and hold some more meetings. Our friends from Voss—nine in number—attended, and joined us at the inn afterwards, where we had an opportunity of speaking to them of what more immediately concerned themselves. They have not held meetings regularly, and this was one of the points to which I felt it right to call their attention. I believe that if they are strengthened to hold out a kindly

invitation to their neighbours, it will not be long before others will gather to them. The people in this district are better off in their worldly circumstances, and also better informed, than in most other parts of Norway. Many are dissatisfied with the Lutheran system, and would gladly exchange it for one of a more simple and spiritual character. I feel very thankful that our visit to them was not delayed.

2nd day, 7th mo. 9th, 1855. To Evanger, fourteen miles by land, thence across the lake, down the rapids to Bolstadören, and then, on account of the great heat, forty-two miles by night to Bergen, which we reached about seven o'clock this morning (Third-day), and took up our quarters at Suntom's Boarding House. This is not at all a desirable looking place for a public meeting. There is an air of idle gossip about many of those whom we meet, and I understand there has been but little settlement in some of the meetings which have been held here. I was rather disposed not to look to any thing beyond a meeting with the few Friends who are left here; but finding I should carry a burden away with me, if this course was pursued, I have been this evening with A. Kloster to look for a room. The one we have selected is used, I believe, for a variety of purposes, concerts, &c. and has been hired by Friends on former occasions. The meeting was by far the smallest we have been at, in proportion to the size of the place. There were not, I think, more than

fifty present, mostly labouring people; but those who did come, appeared serious and attentive, and I am glad the meeting has been held. The few who have, in some sort, professed with Friends, remained at the close of the meeting, and we had a little conference with them.

5th day, 7th mo. 12th. Went on board the Eagle steamer, for Tromsoe. The accommodations on board are much better than we expected.

6th day. We passed one of the highest cliffs in Norway, Hamelen. It rises abruptly, and the upper part perpendicularly, to a height of 1200 feet. About eleven o'clock, the mist which had been hanging about the mountains, surrounded us on all sides, and having reached a critical point of the coast, our engines were stopped, and we were left floating like a log on the water, all the rest of the day. We have on board, besides a large company of Norwegians, and several Germans, three English tourists or rather sportsmen; two of them are clergymen. We have had a good deal of conversation with one of these, touching the affairs of our respective churches, in regard to both of which his remarks were of a very liberal character. He has not quite escaped the effects of the tractarian leaven, I should imagine, but on my speaking of the manner in which high church men are accustomed to turn dissenters over to "uncovenanted mercy," his reply was, "and no bad thing to be turned over to,

I can assure you." He, and his companions, are certainly good specimens of that generally unattractive class, the sporting clergy, though they are not much like fishers of men. He asked Sarah, whether Friends made a point of sending some one to the north every summer, but whether he had ascertained our errand, or was desirous of doing so, I do not know."

CHAPTER X.

Voyage to Tromsoe—visit Trondhjem the ancient capital of Norway—singular effect of mirage—enter the Arctic Circle—magnificent scenery among the Lofoden Islands—arrive at Tromsoe—a large meeting for worship—prejudice removed—visit a company of Lapps—Rein-deer—meet some friends from England—accident to one of them—leave Tromsoe—arrive at Trondhjem—re-visit Stavanger—Flekkefiord—and hold various meetings—Return home—land in London 31st of 8th month.

"7th day, 7th mo. 14th. The scenery becomes finer as we advance. The rounded forms of the gneiss rocks in the south are giving place to the craggy heights of the granite mountains, and the snow appears in larger masses, and extends further down the mountains. In the evening the vessel stopped half an hour at Dalesund, from whence Rollo and his band of northmen embarked, when they went forth to the conquest of Normandy. The weather has become much colder, and we had some heavy showers this evening, with lightning and some thunder. The effect produced on the distant mountains was very grand, as the successive flashes lighted up the outlines, which before had been obscured by the dark mist hanging over them.

1st day, the 15th. We were off Christiansand about eight o'clock this morning. We have found it very

difficult to get any quiet settlement to-day. The coast from Christiansand to Trondhjem is comparatively low and uninteresting, but the signs of habitation and cultivation are more frequent. We landed at Trondhjem, which lies a long distance from the open sea, between nine and ten o'clock, and found decent quarters.

2nd day. Here we are in the ancient capital of Norway, a city of about 16,000 inhabitants, with long, quiet looking streets, the houses mostly of wood. We have been in search of a room for a public meeting, but find it difficult to obtain one. A large room in the Inn, which J. Backhouse and his friends used, is engaged at present, and others in the town cannot be had. We have at length concluded to hire a place commonly used for dancing, and the meeting is fixed for to-morrow evening.

3rd day, 7th mo. 17th. I felt doubtful whether it would not be better to leave holding a meeting till our return from Tromsoe, in the hope that a more suitable place might then be had: but was, on the whole, inclined to make use of what was now to be had, and I feel well satisfied since to have done so; although the meeting proved in some respects a trying one. There was less of quiet settlement than we have witnessed in former meetings, but most of the company appeared serious and attentive. A Cornish man and his wife, who had lived in Norway twenty years, spoke to us

after the meeting, and expressed their satisfaction at having been present.

4th day, 7th mo. 18th. We returned on board the steamer after the meeting. The scenery on this, as on the other side of Trondhjem is comparatively low and uninteresting. I witnessed to-day, a remarkable effect produced by the mirage—the inverted form of a distant island being suspended over the island itself.

5th day. We have been passing through scenery of the most remarkable character the whole day, sharp mountain peaks, and abrupt outlines presenting themselves on all sides, both in the Islands on our left, and the mainland on our right. An island of singular form, called the Horseman, which we passed about two o'clock, marked our entrance of the arctic circle; and during the afternoon, we were in sight of extensive snow fields, and could see the glaciers formed by them, filling the upper part of the rocky valleys beneath.

6th day. A scene of still greater magnificence awaited us to-day, among the Lofoden Islands, which form a group 130 miles in length, stretching out from the shore in a south-westerly direction. Forbes, in his work on Norway, describes one-third of the horizon as being surrounded with sharp mountain peaks; but as the mountains on the mainland are of the same character, and as the atmosphere was equally clear on all sides, it might be said that more than three-fourths of the horizon were so surrounded, during our passage across the Vest-

fiord, which runs up between the Islands and the shore. After calling to deliver mails and passengers, at a place which lies towards the extremity of the group, we passed along the shores, and close under the mountains of these wonderful Islands, some of them from 3,000 to 4,000 feet high, and towards evening entered the narrow channel of the Rafte Sund, which runs up between two of them, and in which the frowning precipices, the jagged heights, and the snow beds lying between, were seen towering immediately above us: words utterly fail to describe such scenes. There are numerous habitations in the valleys of these inaccessible looking Islands, and a large number of persons visit them in the winter, from other places on the Norwegian coast, to take part in the cod fishery, which then gives employment to 30,000 men, as we are credibly informed, though this is double the number mentioned by Forbes.

7th day, 7th mo. 21st. Having retraced the narrow passage of the Rafte Sund, during the night, our course to-day has been between the mainland and the islands. Tromsoe itself stands on a small island, between the mainland and the larger island of Kual, and here we arrived about nine o'clock in the evening. We have passed in sight of some fine mountain ranges to-day Those of Senjen being, as Forbes says, like the mountains of Arran, on the West of Scotland; but the scenery through which we have

passed to-day, cannot be compared with that of yesterday, in point of picturesque grandeur. I have been feeling a good deal of anxiety to-day as to the opening for service which we may find at Tromsoe, which has all along been the point to which I have felt most attraction, in this northern portion of our voyage; and although the voyage hither was not undertaken without serious deliberation, yet many doubts and questionings have arisen respecting it. I have, however, found comfort in the thought, that we have simply endeavoured to do our Heavenly Father's will herein.

1st day, 7th mo. 22nd. Most of the morning was spent in unsuccessful attempts to procure a place to meet in. We could not obtain leave to use the public school-room. A large room in the Inn, which J. Backhouse and L. M. Hoag used, has since been divided, and the warehouses in the town are none of them at liberty. Our friends who were here before, held a meeting in the open air, but I felt pretty sure, that Asbjorn and I should lose our voices if we attempted this, and the weather looked uncertain also. After a while, we received a kind permission from the owner of a barn, two miles from the town, to make use of it, and though it was more distant than seemed desirable, we concluded to accept this offer. The afternoon was spent by two men, under A. Kloster's directions, in manufacturing seats, out of some planks, which we found at the barn. Towards evening the sky assumed a more

threatening aspect, and before the time for going to meeting—half-past seven o'clock—it began to rain. I was glad to find, however, that the people of the town were not discouraged by the weather; many were assembled before the appointed time, and many more came shortly afterwards. I do not know what the numbers were, but it was, I think, the largest meeting I have seen in Norway, excepting at Stavanger. A considerable number were obliged to stand, and there was some disturbance occasioned by the breaking down of two or three seats; but it was striking to observe how desirous the people seemed, of maintaining order, and we had, upon the whole, a very satisfactory meeting. It did not, however, prove relieving, as far as regards the feeling of the need for further service here, and I asked A. Kloster at the close, to mention that we were looking to hold another meeting, of which notice would be given.

2nd day 7th mo. 23rd. We concluded to attempt another meeting in the barn this evening, but found the distance from the town operate more injuriously, as was to be expected, on a week-day evening, and the labourers not having left their work in time to come, our meeting was chiefly composed of women. Several of these were persons above the labouring classes, many were seriously behaved, and among the men, were several young schoolmasters, or persons who are being trained in the Government schools here. They had been with us the

evening before, and entered into conversation with A. Kloster after the meeting last evening, with reference to what they had heard on both occasions, and with an evident wish to understand our views more fully. Whether any opening may present in the town itself, for further service of a public or private character, I do not know, but I feel less clear of this place than I should desire to do.

3rd day 7th mo. 24th. We are getting some Tracts printed for distribution here, and among the Lofoden Islands, on our return. We find there were other causes operating to prevent the attendance of the people at the last meeting, than those to which we had attributed the smallness of the company. There has been a religious movement going on here for the last two years or more among some of the members of the Established Church, who call themselves the "awakened," and it seems that the leaders of this party have latterly been more inclined than they were at one time, to approve the ceremonial observances of the Lutheran Church. Many of their members were at meeting on First-day evening, and this having become known to these leaders, one of them went round to urge on his friends not to do the like again. We have felt a particular wish to obtain further access to these persons; and after considering the matter, concluded that it would be best for A. Kloster to go and call on some of them, which he has now done, and has so far

succeeded in disabusing their minds of the misrepresentations, which had been made to them respecting us, that they were very desirous of attending another meeting, and we have concluded to appoint one, even if we should have to hold it in the distant barn.

4th day 7th mo. 25th. A. Kloster has found a house in the town, partly built, the owner of which is willing to lay a temporary floor down stairs, and a portion of one upstairs which may serve as a gallery. Several of the "awakened," as they term themselves, have called to-day to express regret at not having attended our Second-day meeting, and to make inquiry respecting our views of Christian truth.

Being at liberty this evening, we availed ourselves of the offer of the English Consul, who was our fellow passenger from Hamburgh, to go, accompanied by his servant, to visit the Lapp encampment, situated on his property, in a valley on the mainland; and a curious and interesting sight it was. There are four families of them, sixteen persons in all, lodging together in a sort of round hut, formed of large sticks, with sods of turf placed over them. There was a fire in the centre, the smoke escaping by a large hole over it, which served also for a window. Around the roof were hung bladders of milk, in which sorrel leaves had been boiled; a mixture which they use largely for food. We were admitted into a square

wooden enclosure, in which were upwards of 500 reindeer; several of these were being milked, for which purpose they had been brought down from the mountains; there are about 1000 in all, belonging to two of these families—the other Lapps being their servants. The milk which we tasted was very rich, with a flavour not unlike cocoa-nut milk. Some of the deer were beautiful animals, but many of them are at present changing their coats. They shed their horns every winter, and the young horns are protected with a covering of skin, with fine black hairs upon it, which does not come off till autumn.

The poor people themselves, were objects of much greater interest. They are only here for the summer months, removing in the winter to the Swedish frontier, where the snow is not so deep. They are a short, thick-set muscular looking race, some of them dressed in skins, and most of them wearing the large pointed boots, which they stuff with a kind of dried grass in winter. The babies are fastened up in wooden cradles, of a very peculiar make. The countenances of several of these people were very bright and intelligent, but others had a haggard and rather degraded appearance. One or two spoke Norsk readily. They are supplied with the Scriptures in their own language, and appear much interested in the subject of religion. They wanted to know whether we were Christians, whether we held the true faith, and how we

knew that we were children of God? A. Kloster replied to the last question in the words of the Apostle, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, &c." "But how," they replied, "can you distinguish between the teaching of God's Spirit and the workings of your own spirit?" or to this effect. The questioners seemed very desirous that we should remain till the milking was over, and have some more conversation with them; but the evening was far advanced, we had got wet in crossing the streams as we came up the valley, and seemed obliged, though reluctantly, to retrace our steps without much delay. We told them of our meeting, and lent them some tracts.

Tromsoe is so surrounded by mountains that the sun cannot be seen from thence in the lower part of its course, and we were not equal to the fatigue of ascending the mountain to see it, but we saw the sunshine at midnight, on the snowy height of Bensjordsfind, a mountain 4,000 feet high, south of the town. Not the least part of the pleasure of this excursion to me, was finding a vigorous growth of Cystopteris Montana—perhaps the rarest of British ferns—which I only knew before by description. The musquitos were very troublesome, as we walked up the valley.

5th day, 7th mo. 26th. We were joined at breakfast time, by Wilson Sturge of Birmingham, and Edward Evans of Neath, whom it is very pleasant to find we are to have as companions as far as Trondhjem. They

have just returned from Hammerfest, from whence they had gone in a sloop to Spitzbergen. They seem to have been much interested with their tarriance off its inhospitable shore, though the pleasure was marred by an accident which E. Evans met with: he lost his footing whilst walking along a ledge of rock, and fell, head foremost over a precipice, of some 50 or 60 feet. He struck against a rock in falling, by which he was wounded, but not seriously, and this changed the posture in which he was falling, to the horizontal, and he fell on a soft piece of ground comparatively unhurt; but had afterwards to walk three miles to the boat, and to wait there four hours, till his companions came up. He says he distinctly recognized his gun, which he had left on a lower ledge of rock, whilst he was falling. They are very ready to help us in any way they can.

A. Kloster had a call this morning from the person who had used his influence to prevent others going to the meeting on Second-day. He came to express his regret for what he had thus done, and to ask for information respecting our principles. Other visits of a like kind were received through the day, and the meeting which was held at eight o'clock, in the house before mentioned, was largely attended by the class of persons who have stood aloof from us here. There were no windows in the house, and many stood outside. So earnest has been the spirit of enquiry which has manifested itself, that A. Kloster has seriously entertained the question

of remaining behind for a fortnight; (our own course appearing clear to return by the steamer now arrived). We did not feel that we could do other than encourage him to do so, if he should ultimately think it right; but I felt pretty sure at the close of the meeting, that he would be at liberty to return to Stavanger with us; and so it proved. It was a season long to be remembered, in which the ability seemed given, to set forth the spiritual character of the Gospel covenant, and to show the importance of proving all things, and of holding fast that which is good. A. Kloster spoke after me for a short time, and I had then to commend those, among whom our lot had thus been cast, to the care and keeping of the Lord our Shepherd, and to offer an acknowledgment, such as still lives in my heart, of the unmerited help and favour bestowed upon us. We got on board between ten and eleven o'clock; but A. Kloster remained on shore after us, conversing with some who had been at the meeting, and with whom he is likely to correspond.

6th day, 7th mo. 27th. We sailed about one o'clock this morning. One of the Masters from the Tromsoe Training School, who has been at our meetings, is now on his way to a place in one of the Lofoden Islands, where he is going to live. He is much concerned about the small supply of the Scriptures in these Islands, and is going to correspond with A. Kloster respecting it. We have furnished him with tracts for distribution.

3rd day, 7th mo. 31st. We landed at Trondhjem, last evening, after a fine voyage, but the way does not seem open for another meeting here.

8th mo. 1st to 11th. Service in and around Stavanger. Sailed in the evening for Flekkefiord.

12th. We arrived there about seven a.m., and found Tollag Roisland waiting to accompany us to a place about eighteen miles distant, in the direction of his own residence, where he had appointed a meeting for us. We reached Oye by boat about one o'clock, and were conveyed the remaining distance in a cart, and found, contrary to our usual experience, a large company of people assembled, an hour before the time appointed for the meeting. As it appeared hopeless to accommodate them all in doors, we looked about for a sheltered situation out of doors, and finding such a place in an orchard near at hand, we decided on occupying it. Two chairs and one other seat, were no sooner brought, than the people closed round us on all sides, and a curious looking group we must have appeared to a looker on. There seemed at first but little chance of quiet settlement, a constant talking was kept up by persons outside our company, and immediately in front of us were some very active babies, and a drunken man. However, the character of the meeting seemed to improve as it went on, the noises became less, and the feeling of solemnity increased.

After I had spoken for some time, beginning

with the words, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, &c., Tollag Roisland addressed the company in a very feeling manner, and A. Kloster followed, speaking with unusual animation. The feeling which prevailed towards the close was very different from that which had been shown by some of the company in the early part of the meeting. When it was over, I requested A. Kloster to ask the Friends from Quinnedal, who had been at the meeting, to retire with us to a neighbouring house; it seemed as if we were followed by the feeling of solemnity, which had prevailed in the public meeting towards its close, and I was enabled to find full relief from the concern which had brought me thither. This was the more important to us, as it seemed very desirable that we should return to Flekkefiord, and leave for Stavanger next morning.

2nd day, 8th mo. 13th. A carriole drive of fifty miles, brought us to Egersund; the road passed in the first instance along the upper part of the Fiord, as far as the farm or village of Flekke, (which gives name to the Fiord,) and thence to the town below. The scenery was at first highly picturesque, and afterwards very grand, but through the afternoon, it was simply desolate. After leaving the Fiord, there was a succession of lakes, tarns, and streams, surrounded with rocky, pine-covered terraces, the water in many places was covered with yellow and white lilies, in full flower; beside it grew the Bog Asphodel, the Sundew, &c. On the rocks above were

Cranberries, Raspberries, and other wild fruits, the Parsley Leaf Fern also. The hay harvest is not yet completed, but the corn is being cut. The weather this morning was fine, and the travelling pleasant enough; but the afternoon was very stormy, and the shaking of the carriole, very wearying. We managed to reach the end of our journey before five, p. m.

Third day, 8th mo. 14th. Another fifty miles of travelling, through very stormy weather, brought us to Stavanger. I do not think we have either of us escaped cold, and I am sorry to find that dear S. has not lost hers, during our absence.

4th day. Some further progress in calling on the families. I have been on board a sailing vessel for Shields, leaving next week, but do not think it will suit our purpose. As the Hull steamer leaves Christiansand next First-day, and goes generally, only once a fortnight, it is most likely we shall have to go by Hamburgh, if we defer our return till next week, which it might have been better to avoid, both on account of the longer distance and the prevalence of cholera; but there is no chance of accomplishing all that I have in prospect this week, and we seem therefore not to have any choice left us in the matter.

7th day. After Meeting on 5th day, I left again in the boat with E. Dahl and others, for some places in Shandsoga, at which no meetings have hitherto been held by Friends; and we have three other meetings in

prospect, in that district, at places similarly circumstanced—at all our previous meeting places, meetings had been held by J. Backhouse and L. M. Hoag, and at some of them by other Friends—after which we look to two other places in the north of the Bukkefiord, and to return here in time for a concluding meeting with Friends, before the sailing of the steamer, this day week. Friends have been requested to invite their relations and neighbours to accompany them to meeting to-morrow morning, and the boat is to be ready for us to leave soon after dinner. The way seems open at last for Friends here to take part in the work of Bible distribution, but it has been a difficult matter to arrange about.

1st day, 8th mo. 19th. We had a large and very relieving public meeting at Stavanger. I had to dwell at some length on the promise given concerning our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied," both with reference to the extent to which it might be considered as accomplished, when the words "It is finished," were uttered by Him upon the cross, and when He afterwards ascended up on high, leading captivity captive: and also as regards their application to that work, which is wrought, from age to age, by His Spirit, in the hearts of the children of men, and with especial reference to the solemn enquiry, how far the Saviour's travail had been accomplished, in the spiritual experience of the company there assembled.

After dinner I left with E. Dahl and others on the last of our Fiord voyages. A strong breeze carried us rapidly across to the Shandsoga shore, on the eastern side of the Bukkefiord, and we had a large and solemn meeting in a farm house, called Meltvedt, crossing the lake afterward to Raonons, where we lodged.

8th mo. 20th. Another public meeting this morning, at a farm house, some miles further to the north.

21st. This morning, we ran up one of the northern arms of the Fiord to Sandvïd; the wind was very high, and so squally that the sail had to be held by the hand all the time, and sometimes suddenly lowered. An evening meeting, held in a large room in a farm house, was long in collecting, but a number of serious, earnest looking people came to it, and I trust that something like the breaking of bread was known.

22nd. Weather still very rough. We ran down before the wind to Nessa, where we dined, but from thence to our next place of meeting, in a valley beyond, the wind was directly against us, and our poor friends had to row hard against a stormy sea. After the meeting, which was a relieving one to me, and I believe also to E. Dahl, who took part in it, we felt some difficulty in deciding, whether to make use of an hour and a half of daylight which remained, in running across to the Star Islands. We found, however, that some of our companions, who had got wet, would be glad to remain for the night, and decided at last to do so. Four others slept in the same room

with me, and we had a basin of milk set up on our dressing table, that the cream might be ready for our breakfast.

8th mo. 23rd. We rose about four, and set forth. The run across to the Star Islands, was the portion of our voyage, in which we should be the most exposed to the swell of the Atlantic, and I believe we all felt a degree of relief, when we found ourselves under their lee. The wind being fair for Stavanger, I had thought of nothing else but going direct thither, until E. Dahl mentioned that a Friend resided in one of the Islands which we were approaching, and which we had not before visited. It was decided upon this, that we had better make a call on him at all events; and we found him waiting for us in his boat-house; he had heard that we were out in the fiord, and thought we should come to see him. The next thing to be considered was whether his neighbours should be invited to sit with us; and not feeling at liberty to omit this, we decided to remain for two or three hours, and let notice be given at once of a meeting.

This proved to be the last of the many meetings held on the islands and shores of the Bukkefiord, and it was a season in which much lively feeling prevailed. I had to enlarge on the message, borne by the angel, whom the apostle John beheld flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach, and our dear friend E. Dahl spoke at some length. It was a great comfort after meeting, to find that the wind, which

was still rough, continued sufficiently favourable to allow of our reaching Stavanger, and the more so as we knew our wives were awaiting our return with some anxiety. By six o'clock we were once more safe beside Endre Dahl's tea table.

8th mo. 24th. To-day A. Kloster and I finished our calls on the members and attenders of Stavanger meeting.

7th day, 8th mo. 25th. Our last day in Stavanger! We had a refreshing season of religious retirement with E. and M. Dahl, after breakfast. Dear S. had been engaged, last evening, in commending them, with ourselves, to the gracious keeping of our Heavenly Father. At ten o'clock we met our dear friends of Stavanger meeting for the last time, and a heart-tendering opportunity it proved. The ability was, I believe, given, to commend them, both in ministry and prayer, to God and to the word of His grace, as being able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. I managed to get out of the house before the company had begun to disperse, so as to take leave of them as they came out; and although the effort was almost more than I knew how to bear, I felt thankful afterwards that it had been made. In the afternoon there was a conference of Friends, which I attended, at which the promotion of education was well considered. It was late in the evening before the steamer arrived. Many of our friends accompanied us to the shore, several

of them going on board. The voyage from Stavanger to the mouth of the Elbe was a rough one, but we had a fine run across to London, where we landed on the 31st of 8th month, 1855.

The recollection that we were homeward bound was a very welcome one, but I believe that during most of the voyage, our thoughts dwelt more on that which we had left behind; on the numberless mercies experienced during our foreign sojourn, and on the varied intercourse which we had held with many, whom we may probably never meet again in this life; and though the retrospect is one from which boasting is altogether excluded, it has brought with it a thankful and peaceful feeling of relief from the concern under which we had gone forth."

CHAPTER XI.

Review of the Norwegian journey—W. Tanner's solicitude for the younger members of our Society and attenders of meetings—Family gathering at Sidcot—declining health of J. P. Sturge—interview with him—anxiety on account of S. T.'s health—Death of Arthur T. Tanner—religious visit to Ireland in company with his mother—Meetings with navvies near Home—Visits the meetings of Friends in Lancashire, &c.—Service interrupted by declining health—Voyage to the Mediterranean.

"Bristol, 31st of 12th mo. 1855. The close of the year seems to bring with it more than a common claim upon our gratitude, in the retrospect of mercies and favours vouchsafed in the course of it. The Norwegian journey, which occupied us nearly three months, was one in which we were made largely to partake of the protecting care and guidance of our Heavenly Father. The sense of the outward preservation extended, was afresh brought home to us when we received, soon after our return home, an account of the loss of the steamer 'Norse,' with a large number of her crew and passengers, in the next voyage to that in which we had sailed from Stavanger, on board of her.

My attention has been very much occupied of late with the subject of the care to be extended towards the younger members of our Society, and the attenders of

our Meetings. A Minute from the Yearly Meeting, on this subject, was received by the Quarterly Meeting in the 9th month, and a Committee was appointed to consider the subject, which, after holding two long and interesting sittings, applied to the Quarterly Meeting, held in Bristol this month, to be continued as a Committee, with power to appoint sub-committees to attend the Monthly Meetings. Before this proceeding commenced, I had been in communication with some of the younger men of this Meeting, who have felt desirous of late, that some further attempts at mental edification should be made. It was a relief to me to find, on communicating with a number of Friends in the north of England, that there is a very prevalent feeling of a want existing amongst us. It is however far easier to discover wants, than to supply them. My earnest desire is, that we may be rightly directed therein.

We spent most of last week at Sidcot, where we have had a delightful family gathering. The last evening of our being all together, our dear mother was engaged to pour forth before the Lord, a fervent acknowledgment of the unmerited favours bestowed upon us, and an earnest prayer for the continued extension of divine regard. She had before alluded to the uncertainty there was as to when we might all meet again, and the query passed through my own mind, 'shall we ever do so?' but I did not express it, and had no special

forebodings of approaching changes in our little circle. Enough is it to know that 'hitherto the Lord hath helped us,' and that He will never leave nor forsake those who trust in Him."*

"15th of 12th mo. 1856. I have to-day had an interview, of touching interest, with my dear and honoured friend, Jacob P. Sturge, whose declining health affords but too much reason to fear that he is drawing towards the close of his earthly race. It has long been my privilege to enjoy a community of thought and feeling with him, on various questions, connected with the state and prospects of our Religious Society; and the part which we took together in the labours of the Quarterly Meeting's Committee last spring, seemed to unite us in a bond of close friendship. I was led (as I believe others were) to regard his service on that occasion, in the light of an evening sacrifice; but I had not anticipated that we should be deprived of his presence and assistance, as soon as now seems likely to be the case. We had some interesting conversation this morning, on subjects, such as claimed our attention at the time of the Committee's interview with the young people; and from this it was evident, that his views respecting them, so far from having changed, were receiving additional confirmation to his own mind, in the prospect of the solemn change to which

* 1864. The company then assembled were never, I believe, all again together.

he is now looking steadily, and I believe trustfully forward. Before we parted, he expressed in faltering, but earnest accents, a kind feeling of desire for myself, that nothing might discourage me from fulfilling the ministry which has been committed to my trust, and from occupying the position which, he believed, I had been providentially called to fill in this meeting I do not think that any like expression ever sank so deeply into my heart, and I desire that it may be treasured up there as a memorial in days to come, should my own life be spared."

The year 1857 appears to have been spent chiefly at home. The dangerous illness of his beloved father, and his sister's want of health, caused much solicitude, and in the autumn a journey to Ireland was taken for the benefit of the latter. There, as elsewhere, both at home and in various other meetings, he appears to have diligently laboured in the service of his Lord. His wife speaks of the First-day spent in Dublin, as a time of much interest; and from her memoranda we find that towards the close of the year he was himself laid aside by illness for nearly four weeks, and did not resume his seat at meeting until Christmas-day, when he spoke, with tremulous voice, on the words "To us who believe He is precious," saying how unspeakable is the comfort when earthly friends are unavailing, to be able to turn to our blessed Saviour, and feel that in Him we have still an unfailing Friend, and one whose

love for us has been such that He even laid down His life for our sakes.

"11th of 7th mo. 1858. Another year is wearing on apace. Like the preceding, it has brought with it many causes of trial and anxiety, as well as great occasion for gratitude to our Heavenly Father. The state of my dear Sarah's health, during the latter part of the winter, and the early spring, was such as to cause me constant anxiety; but I trust I do feel very thankful for the more favourable indications which have been afforded of late; and although they are not such as to remove the feeling of anxiety altogether, the hope is renewed that we may be permitted to journey on awhile longer together; and oh, the value of such companionship, in such a world!

A large call has been made on our sympathy, by the illness and death of many of our dear friends. In Bristol we had seven funerals last month, including those of Arnee Frank and Joseph Eaton. What great occasion have we, amidst so many changes, and uncertainties, and trials, for humble thankfulness to our Heavenly Father, for the spiritual rest which He invites us to partake of, even here, and for the still more glorious rest which remains to His children and people, in a world where sin and sorrow are unknown."

"28th of 11th mo. I little thought when writing the above, that our own dear father had nearly run his earthly course; but so it proved. An illness, which

came on very suddenly, on the 11th of 9th month, terminated on the 16th in his death. A great blow it was to us, and especially to my dear mother and sister; but the hand of love was plainly manifested in this sore bereavement, and the rejoicing hope was ours, that in our dear father's case, death was but the entrance into life. The trial was not a little increased to myself, by the very precarious state in which my dearest S. appeared to be at the time; but with humble gratitude would I record the relief from anxiety, which has since been granted on that account. Her life may still be regarded as more precarious than my own, but the thought of being permitted an extension of the intercourse which we have had together, is a source of untold comfort."

"The chief event of 1859, as far as we were concerned, was a religious visit paid by my dear mother and myself, in the autumn, to our friends in Ireland. Nearly twenty years before, I had gone to Dublin, to accompany her on her return home, from a visit of a similar character. I was at that time under the impression that I must some day go thither in the service of the Gospel, and I then felt encouraged to hope, that if I waited for the right time, I might have my dear mother for a companion. Had I gone at an earlier period, I have reason to believe that I should not have enjoyed the privilege of her company and joint service. In 1858 I was brought into some close exercise of mind

in the consideration of whether I could longer delay, but at length felt satisfied to do so. My dear father's illness and death, which occurred shortly afterwards, tended to confirm me in the belief that I had done right; but in the following year I felt that there must be no further delay, and then it was an untold comfort to me to find that my mother was prepared to unite in the concern.

The remembrance of this visit (in part of which we were accompanied by Elizabeth Bryan, of Belfast,) is felt to present abundant occasion for reverent gratitude to Him, who was near to supply all our need. The open door presented to us in some large public meetings in the revival district in Ulster, and the no less open door which we found among the dear young people of our own Society in Dublin and elsewhere, filled us with thankful admiration. A number of social gatherings in Dublin and other places, were not the least relieving part of the service. To many in that land, our hearts are closely bound in a feeling of tender Christian love, and the earnest desire arises, that the word of the Lord may, in very deed, have free course, and be glorified among them. Previously to leaving home for Ireland, I had had some public meetings of a satisfactory and relieving character, with the navigators at work on the South Wales Railway, near Almondsbury.

12th mo. 3rd, 1860. To-day my dearest S. has been to meeting, the first time for ten months, her health

having been all that time in a more or less feeble state. In the first month of this year, she attended the funeral of the last of two little twin girls, over whose loss my brother and sister Samuel had to mourn. Shortly after she became prostrated by alarming illness, and was for more than a month in a very precarious state. Since then, the general tendency has been towards recovery; but there have been many variations. None but those who have passed through similar trials, can realise the depth of distress which they involve. I was often reminded of the words "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." But though often faint and trembling, sufficient strength was given to cling to the cross through all: and oh! what a mercy that was! In reference to the wormwood and the gall, which were then meted out, I can say in the words of another Scripture, "My soul has them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me."

As regards the state of our meeting, we have much to comfort us, especially in the accession to the number of ministers. For seven years I had to sit alone as a minister, on the men's side of our gallery, and was often ready to compare myself to the "pelican of the wilderness, the owl of the desert, or the sparrow alone upon the house top." I have often felt that I could most thankfully relinquish my own trust, if such help might be given; and though ready now to

labour on a little longer, if so permitted and enabled, I am thankful for the feeling of willingness to "decrease" and become nothing, if only the Lord's work may be carried on.

12th mo. 24th, 1861. Another year is drawing fast to a close, and it is one which we shall have long to remember. On the 1st of 1st month my connexion with business finally ceased; but the needful arrangements connected with it are not yet complete. In the 3rd month I asked leave to visit the meetings of Lancashire and Cheshire, and of Warwick, Leicester and Staffordshire; and the Minute then granted me was only returned at our last Quarterly Meeting. My health, which before had been in an unsatisfactory state, became worse, after I had obtained the Minute, and rendered it needful that I should delay the engagement, and seek rest and relaxation. With this view, my dear S. and her cousin, Rebecca Turner, accompanied me to the Mediterranean, from whence we returned about the end of the 5th month."

The following letter gives a lively picture of some of the varied objects of interest presented in this voyage.

NAPLES, 24 IV, 1861.

"MY DEAR COUSIN,

The sight of thy hand-writing has often gladdened my heart, but never more so than when on landing here yesterday morning, I found thy welcome

letter at the Post Office. Thou wilt already have learnt from Sarah's letters, if they have been forwarded to thee, as we hope from Sidcot, that we failed to carry out our plan of coming hither from Marseilles, and were induced to go from thence in the first instance, to Malta. Thus far we have had every reason to be satisfied with our course of proceeding. It was extremely interesting to me to visit Calypso's Isle again, after an interval of 27 years, and to introduce my companions to some of my old haunts, and to one or two of those whose society I enjoyed on the occasion of my former visit. I had too the pleasure of an introduction to one whose name was at that time familiar to me, as a labourer in the gospel in the Ionian Islands, Isaac Lowndes. For the last 14 years he had charge of the Bible depôt at Malta, and is now about to retire (at the age of 74) on a pension from the society, which he has done so much to serve. The said depôt is very useful in supplying the Mediterranean stations, with the exception of North Italy, which now gets its large demands supplied direct from London. Malta itself is a barren rock, spiritually as well as naturally. The two great armies of priests and soldiers, (5,000 of each) seem to destroy almost every green thing. There are, however, some interesting people there. We have had too, many pleasant and some interesting companions on the steamers, at the table d'hôtes, &c. One fine young fellow, a Sicilian, who resides here, and came with us from Messina, where he had been to lay the telegraph cable across the Faroe Straits, interested me deeply. Like most of the more intelligent of his countrymen, he longs to see Italy delivered from tyranny

of all kinds, and believes as little in the Pope as he does in Bomba. But where is the man to come from, who shall preach to these inquiring people the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free. Superstition plays most effectually into the hands of Infidelity, and the latter remains when the former is exploded. In the mind of this young man, and of tens of thousands besides, who it must be remembered have had none of the advantages of Christian training, there are many obstacles to a simple reception of the truth as it is in Jesus. I ventured to speak of the need for us to be brought into a child-like condition of mind, and to have the pride of our hearts brought down, in order that we might receive in all their fulness, the glad tidings of redeeming love. I have written home to ask that a copy of S. Grellet's life may be sent to him. How I wish that book were translated into French, German and Italian. In speaking of the Bible depôt at Malta, perhaps Sarah mentioned the great demand there has been of late for the Arabic Scriptures in Egypt, and the supply by sale of about 500 New Testaments to the sailors of some Russian ships of war which touched at Malta.

As to the immediate object of our voyage, I hope that I have made some progress towards recovery But I do not feel that with the degree of improvement hitherto experienced, I could have suitably undertaken the service to which I had looked at Manchester last week, or at Birmingham to-day. Easterly winds seem thus far to have followed us everywhere, and to have kept up the irritation in the tongue and throat. I have also a troublesome cough,

which has greatly disturbed my rest. Still I believe I am in the way to be better, and that I am already stronger than when I left home; my weight was then only 8½ stone, and in that respect also I hope to find an improvement. I do not, however, think that we must look toward reaching home before the beginning of the sixth month. In the mean time we are not, on the whole, to be pitied in our present lot. Dear S. has, I think, improved in health more decidedly than I have, and I hope this will prove to have been the case also with R. Turner, who suits us admirably well as a travelling companion. Till within the last three days, the weather has been beautifully clear and fine, and the varied display of natural beauty around us has been a continual feast. The deep blue of the Mediterranean (or green as the case may be) strikes me quite as forcibly as in times past. The view which we had of the upper part of Etna —its base and extreme summit being covered with clouds—was majestic beyond expression. Stromboli sent up one or two bright jets of flame, as we passed it the following evening, and now Vesuvius, which was hidden in clouds when we entered the bay of Naples, is beginning to discover to us its fair proportions. This bay is certainly worthy of the high praise which has been bestowed upon it. There is a blending of bold outline with soft colouring and rich beauty, such as is very rarely to be met with elsewhere. Naples itself, too, is in many respects a charming place, and as we looked down upon it from the heights to-day, the white buildings undimmed by smoke, it seemed almost as if we were looking at an exquisitely painted panoramic scene. Day by day the words pass through my mind "all save the spirit of man is divine."

Sight-seeing in cities was never much to my taste, and I am prevented from entering the gorgeous churches, by the old Quaker scruple against taking off the hat at the entrance of a building, in acknowledgment of its sanctity. We have however been much interested to-day in examining the rich collection of antiquities from Pompeii and Herculaneum in the Borbonica Museum. At present the weather is too cold for excursions; but the advanced state of the vegetation shows how much warmer it has been. It seems a curious thing indeed to anticipate summer by passing through a few degrees of latitude. There are certain objects it seems, which may be attained by passing either through *space or time*. We are now in the land of vines, olives and figs. In the botanic gardens here (which are badly kept up) I saw three araucarias growing side by side, Excelsa, Brasiliensis and Cuninghami; at least these are the names given them. We heard the nightingale very distinctly in this garden. Among ferns, the most abundant I have yet seen, are Adiantum capillus veneris and Gymnogramma leptophylla. I was interested in finding the former on the little quarantine beach at Malta, where I first saw it in 1833.

26th. The enclosed frond is from Pompeii, where we spent two hours yesterday, strolling through the deserted streets of that "sad and silent city." I need not attempt any description, neither must I follow out the varied trains of thought and feeling to which the sight of these marvellous remains gave rise. It was striking to see the graceful maiden-hair growing in the den for the wild beasts, in the bottom of the amphitheatre, and I saw

exactly the same thing at Syracuse in 1834. I find I must be cautious about excursions, having been very much fatigued yesterday. I do not think it likely we shall leave here on our homeward way before the 14th prox. Letters take five or six days, I believe, to reach us from England. We are now very letter-hungry; the last having been sent to Palermo. Sarah joins me in a message of dear love.

Thine most affectionately,

W. TANNER.

P.S. The Neapolitans are still suffering mortification at the idea of having their seat of royalty reduced to the rank of a provincial city. If the possession of Rome could be obtained as the head quarters of the new kingdom, all this would be at an end. We find our Italian New Testaments readily received."

We resume William Tanner's increasingly brief memoranda of service after his return from the Mediterranean.

"I attended the Quarterly Meetings at Lancaster and Stoke-upon-Trent, and some of the meetings composing them, but found it best to return home for a time, before completing these engagements. The attendance of the autumn Quarterly Meetings at Liverpool and Leicester, and of some of the particular meetings which I had not before been at, brought this formidable service to a close. My dear

friend, George Thomas, kindly accompanied me in most of these visits, and my dear S. was with me the remainder of the time. The chief burden of this concern had reference to the young people in the meetings of Birmingham, Leicester, Manchester, Liverpool and Birkenhead. With some of these social gatherings, and meetings for worship, specially appointed, were held; and I did feel humbly thankful for the belief, that a door of entrance was granted from place to place, beyond what I had ventured to look for. For this and for the continuance towards us of unnumbered, unmerited mercies, the Lord's name be praised.

12th mo. 14th, 1862. I have again to speak of mercies which have been renewed day by day continually. During the present, as during the former year, I have been a good deal from home, seeking to discharge debts of love which I have felt to be due from me towards my friends. My dear cousin, John Ford, of York, has been most acceptably my companion and fellow-labourer, on most of these occasions. After attending the last Yearly Meeting in Dublin, we visited the different Friends' schools in Ireland, and on our return to Dublin, we held two large meetings, one for worship, and the other of a more social character, with the young people of Dublin Monthly Meeting.

The attendance of the General Meeting for Ackworth, in the 7th month, the third in succession

I have been at, also afforded an opportunity for religious labour. In the 9th month I attended the Quarterly Meeting for London and Middlesex. Early in the 11th month, I joined my cousin J. Ford, in a series of religious engagements, chiefly among the young people in and about London. The month which was thus occupied was a time of exhausting labour, but one which will always be held in thankful remembrance, on account of the uniform kindness and openness with which we were received, and yet more, on account of the unmerited help and favour vouchsafed by our Lord and Saviour. The humble supplication was often raised in our hearts, that He would graciously pardon all that was amiss or defective, that He would bless our feeble services, and would enable us to render unto Him all the glory and the praise.

We were present at ten social gatherings, appointed for the young people, and at upwards of twenty meetings for worship. One of the last of these was a large, and very relieving meeting, with the young people, in Devonshire House. After my cousin had returned home, I attended the Morning Meeting and the Meeting for Sufferings. At a committee of the latter, a solemn leave was taken of Russell Jeffrey and his companions, Henry Hipsley and William Brewin, on their departure for India. Before my cousin left London, several days were devoted to

receiving calls at the Institute, from such Friends as desired private interviews with us. Some of these proved to be of a deeply interesting character.

1st mo. 10th, 1864. The record kept in this book seems to have resolved itself into a brief yearly review of the more prominent events of my life. This may be partly attributable to the indolence which makes one slow to take up the pen; but I must say also that my own views and feelings have, of later time, run counter to the habit of recording spiritual experiences at any length. Last year's events and engagements were, so far as we were concerned, very much the counterpart of those of some former years. We had again occasion to be very thankful, that all who remained of our family circle were preserved in comparative health, and our hearts were gladdened by the arrival of a little nephew at Sidcot; my sister Mary Anna's first-born.

For the first time for thirteen years, I was able to attend the whole of the sittings of our Yearly Meeting. A visit to the Women's Yearly Meeting formed part of this service. Its proceedings were in some respects of unusual interest.

In the autumn, my cousin, J. Ford, was again my companion in religious service. About a month was spent in attending the Quarterly Meetings of Durham and Westmoreland, and in visiting the meetings composing the former. Only three of the smallest meetings were missed, and in the larger meetings

we had large and interesting social gatherings, composed chiefly of the young; besides holding meetings for worship, to which the public were invited. At the close we were again made thankful for a peaceful release.

My dear wife and mother were at Southport most of the time, and on our return home we found the members of the Yearly Meeting's Committee, appointed to visit this Quarterly Meeting, engaged in the prosecution of their service in Bristol, and a good service they had here. Though rest and quiet during the winter seemed very desirable, yet on returning the Minute for Durham, &c. in the 11th month, 1863, I asked leave to visit the meetings composing our own Quarterly Meeting, and to hold public meetings in some places, and also to engage in a series of evening visits, partly of a social character, to Friends of our own meetings.

The early part of the year 1864 was occupied by a series of evening visits, partly of a social character, to the families of Friends in Bristol, and with interviews with a number of young persons, who came to my own house to see me, and also with some religious engagements in the other meetings of our Quarterly Meeting. But as the spring advanced I had to contend with so much bronchial affection, as to be laid aside for some months, from active engagements of all kinds.

This led to a protracted tarriance at the sea-side, in the fifth and sixth months, first at Clevedon and afterwards at Ilfracombe and Lynton. Although my health became comparatively restored in the autumn of 1864, I did not feel called upon to enter on any other public engagements than those which came in course in our own meetings, and in the north of England, where we paid a visit to our friends in the 11th month."

CHAPTER XII.

William Tanner's concluding labours, from memoranda by Sarah Tanner—Sketch of his character, pursuits, recreations, &c.—His last illness and death.

WILLIAM TANNER'S autobiographical memoranda end with the year 1864. He once more attended the Yearly Meeting in London, in the Fifth month, 1865. On this occasion, he proposed that a separate Epistle should be addressed to Friends in North America, on the restoration of peace, the downfall of Slavery, and on the field of Christian labour opened up among the emancipated. The Yearly Meeting entered cordially into the subject, it was referred to the Committee of representatives, and resulted in an Epistle which was extensively circulated on the American continent. In the Seventh month he attended the Quarterly Meeting for Cornwall at Liskeard. On the 6th of the Ninth month, still diligent in his Master's work, he obtained the concurrence of his Monthly Meeting for religious service in the north of England; in this, as on previous occasions, he was joined by his cousin John Ford. A memorandum, by his widow, part of the preparation,

which shortly before her close, she made for the narrative of her dear husband's life and labours, refers as follows to this visit, and supplies a brief account of the few remaining services of his early closed career.

"In the autumn of 1865 he left home for religious service in the north of England. This labour of love occupied about six weeks, and many, it is believed, could tell of the comfort and instruction derived from the words of Christian hope or solemn warning then received. Towards the young and the doubting, his sympathies ever flowed freely, and on this visit were, on various occasions, drawn into lively exercise, whilst placing, as it were, his soul in their soul's stead, and comforting them with the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God. He returned from this engagement with a peaceful mind, but in a state of great physical exhaustion. From this he soon rose sufficiently to resume his round of active duties on behalf of his fellow men, and to fulfil with diligence and earnestness the ministry with which he believed himself to be entrusted by the great Head of the church. Never, perhaps, had his words fallen with more unction and force on the hearts of his hearers, than during the last year of his life; and some, as they listened to him, thought they saw in this the foreshadowing of an early withdrawal from the scene of his earthly labour, to one of higher and more perfect service.

The opening of 1866 found him in a state of great bodily feebleness but persevering, with undaunted and elastic spirit, in his active round of philanthropic and religious engagements. Lookers on could little imagine the weariness of the flesh under which those were often carried on, as they saw him with cheerful countenance, and an all embracing sympathy for others, entering with unabated interest into their trials and difficulties, and seeking, both from his own resources, and by appeals to those of more ample means, to relieve the distress in which poverty involves so many. And far beyond the value of pecuniary aid, was felt to be the freeheartedness with which it was offered, and the brotherly solicitude, that the hard discipline of adversity, might be sanctified to the hearts of the sufferers.

Few subjects have, of later years, laid such deep and abiding hold on his feelings, as the suffering condition of the Freedmen, in the Southern States of America; and most diligently and perseveringly did he work to arouse others to a sense of their wrongs, and the need for strenuous and united effort to aid them, while passing through a crisis that was full of hope for the future, but fraught with accumulated sufferings during the period of transition. Most gladly did he throw his whole energy into their cause, rejoicing to spend and be spent in the service of this outraged and downtrodden portion of the human family. Though he did not live to see the end of the struggle, he took comfort in be-

lieving that progress was being made, and that a brighter day had dawned on those who had long groaned beneath the yoke of the oppressor.

In the early spring of 1866 he paid his last visit to Charlbury, on the occasion of the 90th birth-day of his aunt Rachel Albright. On his return home his anxieties on his wife's account were greatly increased by an accession of illness. In the summer they spent six weeks at Weston. And notwithstanding the pressure of anxiety, he was able to take long rambles in the country. These he greatly enjoyed, in company with several beloved friends, who shared them with him.

In the autumn he spent a fortnight at Sidcot, his dear native place. Here it was pleasant to him to retrace the scenes of his early ministerial labours. On the 18th of the Ninth month he attended the Quarterly Meeting at Reading. On this occasion his ministry was peculiarly impressive."

After thus briefly adverting to the concluding labours of her dear husband, Sarah Tanner has left the following sketch of his habits of mind, his pursuits, his recreations, &c.

"His reading was habitually varied in its character, though as life advanced, his preference for works connected with religion, became more exclusive. The small portion of leisure he could devote to reading, made a wise selection the more important, and it was his rule to read thoroughly any work that he found worthy of

perusal at all. His relish for genuine poetry was very keen, and his quotations were often very aptly fitted to express his own sentiments. Works of fiction never had much hold on him, and he had no taste for the ordinary run of modern novels.

The subject of dialects always interested him, and this interest was increased as respected the provincialisms of this part of the country, by the publication of poems in the Dorsetshire dialect,* which corresponds very greatly with that of Somersetshire. These poems commended themselves to him in various ways. The sentiments are pure, and exempt from the coarseness which often disfigures such attempts to imitate the diction of the humble classes. The descriptions of country scenes are varied and lifelike, the rhythm flowing and sweet, and the mingling of pathos and humour, such as forms great attraction for those to whom the language is familiar. It occurred to him that the reading of many of these poems, especially to village audiences, might have both an interest and use, in raising their tastes, by thus representing homely and familiar objects, under a refined and poetical aspect. Closely occupied as he was with more important engagements, he resolved to make the attempt, and he read selections from these poems in a number of villages round his native home, and in several places, repeatedly. The experiment was singularly successful. Large numbers

* Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset dialect.

attended these readings and gave delighted attention—the merry laugh or the deep stillness, marking the humorous or pathetic character of the pieces. He read these poems several times to Bristol audiences, and though to them the language and subjects were less familiar, they were generally cordially responded to.

Though it might truly be said that the strength of his days was given up to serve the Lord, and to serve his generation according to His will, the range of his interests was extensive and varied. Into most of the prominent topics of the day, whether in politics, scientific discoveries, or questions relating to human progress, he entered with characteristic energy: and though often cast down from a sense of the appalling extent of sin and misery in the world, his hopeful spirit, and implicit faith in the love of God, and in His purposes of mercy in Jesus Christ, led him to commit what he was unable to fathom, to the great and beneficent Father, who alone can comprehend the mysteries of evil, and its consequent sufferings. A keen appreciation of the beautiful, in many of its developments, was the source of lively enjoyment to him. His eye ranged with delight over a magnificent view, or glowed with deep feeling over a fine sunset, or the glories of the star-spangled heavens. Nor was his enjoyment the less in the minute objects of nature, revealing in their finished beauties and wonderful adaptation to the designed end, the Master's mind

that planned and fashioned them. Often would he refer to those beautiful lines of Heber, "O God! O Good beyond compare," &c. as descriptive of his own feelings.

But his great interest among plants was centred in ferns. This might be called a passion with him, and those who best knew the pressure of more weighty matters on his mind, and the great physical exhaustion these often produced, rejoiced in the entire unbending of the bow, and its restored elasticity, by an hour passed among these favourite plants, tending them with a kind of parental fondness, refreshing them with water, and carefully removing any dead frond, or intrusive snail that threatened to harm them."

With the preceding passage ends, somewhat abruptly, the sketch of William Tanner's character, as depicted by his widow, for here, her pen was arrested by the hand of death. It only remains now to give an account of his short illness, and the peaceful close of his useful and devoted life, we copy from a narrative, privately circulated immediately after his decease.

"Those who had the privilege of being associated with William Tanner during the last few weeks, had witnessed with pleasure the vigour and brightness of his mind, his genial spirit, and all his accustomed capacity for social enjoyment. On the 30th of the 10th month, he was one of a large company, met at the house of our friend Joseph Davis. This was one of

those occasions which he greatly enjoyed, as bringing together a large number of friends, especially of the younger class, and binding them together in a common interest of instructive conversation. In writing to a relation, he speaks of it as a large and successful social gathering. On the 31st, he attended the meeting at Portishead. His well known voice was heard there, for the last time, in the public advocacy of his Master's cause. He quoted the expression used by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in speaking of the faith of Moses, "He endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

In a letter to his cousin John Ford, written on the 2nd inst., the day before his seizure, he mentioned his intention of being at Sidcot, on First-day, to attend the interment of his aged cousin, Hannah Gregory; and referring to another recent death, he says, "So the autumn leaves are falling thickly around us, in more senses of the word than one." Little did he or his many loving friends think that he was so soon to fall, not like the sere and withered leaf, but as the corn fully ripe, ready for the sickle and the heavenly garner.

The concluding petition of his last vocal prayer in the family, the evening before his fatal illness began, has been in remembrance very precious, and has seemed to the sorrowing survivors, to have been thus far, graciously answered. It was that we might be sheltered

that night and evermore, even as the chickens are sheltered under the wing.

On the 3rd of the 11th month, at noon, he was suddenly seized with pain, quickly followed by oppressed breathing and cold chills. Medical care was soon at hand, but on the following day his strength was greatly prostrated, and serious apprehensions were entertained. On the 5th, a slight improvement in the breathing afforded a momentary ray of hope. In the afternoon of that day he said, "It is a great favour that I do not feel any burthen resting on my mind," and made frequent and grateful reference to the peace granted him, and to the absence of all anxiety or care. On the 6th, the rapid action of the heart was very distressing. The anxiety of those who watched him, and their helplessness to relieve him, finding utterance in the expression "We can only pray for thee," he replied, "Prayer is a great support in such a time as this." On leaving the room for a time, his sorrowing wife said "God bless thee," he rejoined, "And thee too, even to the end; and I have an unshaken trust that it will be so, through Jesus Christ our Lord." On her asking if he would like to have a Psalm read, he assented, but desired that it should be short, as in his state of weakness, the mind could not act continuously on any subject; then added, as if speaking to himself, "He knoweth our frame." On the 7th, the difficulty of breathing increased. His brother Arthur and his kind and attentive doctor,

Mr. Coe, on whose judgment and skill his patient placed implicit reliance, watched him through the night. About two o'clock it became evident that the sands of life were running low. As the end drew near, he still recognized his loved ones, who had been summoned around him; his mother on going to his bed-side said, "The angel of the Lord is encamped round about us," to which he replied, "I believe it is even so." His unselfishness as well as his thoughtful care for his dear, invalid wife, was manifest amidst his sufferings. On his directing some little arrangements to be made for her comfort, she said, "Never mind me, darling, now," to which he replied, "Yes, I shall to the very last."

After giving to those around him messages of love for absent relatives and friends, he turned to his beloved wife saying he could selfishly rejoice in being the first to be taken, that he had not anticipated this, seeing that for a long time it had appeared likely for him to be the one to tread the solitary path of life alone, but it had been ordered otherwise, and though for her sake, he would have preferred to watch over and care for her to the end, and then soon to follow, he could now commend her to the love and care and sympathy of his family; and it was an inexpressible comfort to him to feel assured that she would be in the safe keeping of a God of love, who would sustain and comfort her.

While labouring for breath, his voice was again heard, saying that it was very unexpected to him to have us around him, to cheer his heart, while he was now apparently nearing the confines of the eternal world, into which he hoped, through the mercy of the Lord our Saviour, to be permitted to enter and to join in the praises of the great assembly in the world above. Some expressions followed, which, though rendered somewhat incoherent by failing powers, were strikingly characteristic—the echoes of long and faithful service. He spoke as though addressing a congregation, warning them against some of the temptations to evil abounding in the world. After a pause he said, "Time and strength fail me, but I would commend you to God, and to the glorious display of His love, as revealed in the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Shortly before the close the restlessness passed away, and when the power of utterance was gone, an earnest upward look, rested on his countenance, as though gazing into heaven, while waiting for the peaceful dismissal of the happy spirit from its earthly tenement. A few more minutes passed—the respirations were marked by longer intervals—and all was still. We bowed under the sustaining conviction that our loved one was "for ever with the Lord."

The funeral took place on the 15th of the 11th month, at Sidcot, the native place of the deceased,

amidst a large concourse of friends and relatives, from many parts of the country, remote and near. The inhabitants of Sidcot and Cheddar, as well as many from surrounding districts, in which William Tanner had faithfully laboured as a minister of the Gospel, from his earliest years, assembled also in great numbers. Beside the open grave, and afterwards in a large and solemn meeting, testimony was borne to the efficacy of Divine grace, as exhibited in the life and conversation and Gospel labours of our beloved friend. The good tidings of Salvation by Jesus Christ were proclaimed, and all were invited to accept the proffered redemption, so freely offered, that they all might know, as our dear friend had known, "their robes to be made white in the blood of the Lamb."

CHAPTER XIII.

Prefatory remarks—some account of Sarah Tanner and the other members of her family—Her illness and death.

It will have been seen from the preceding pages, that the beloved wife of William Tanner did not long survive him.

It is intended that a more detailed account of her life, with extracts from her memoranda and letters, shall form the subject of a separate volume, to be either published, or printed for private circulation.

We do not therefore propose to add here more than a brief sketch of her history, and that of her family, with a glance at the scattered graves of the household, from the banks of the Neva, to their native England, and to the far off shores of America, before we follow the last of her race, to her peaceful resting place at Sidcot, among the native hills of her beloved husband.

Twenty-seven years have passed away since Daniel Wheeler, the head of the family, died at New York, but his life and gospel labours will be familiar to many of our readers, through a published autobiography and memoir.

Early left an orphan, he entered the Royal Navy when very young. After six years' service he left the Navy and enlisted in the Army; and having encountered various perils, and experienced remarkable deliverances, both by land and sea, in which he afterward gratefully recognised a Father's loving hand, he finally quitted the service in 1796, at the age of 25.

In 1797 he was received into membership with the Society of Friends. In 1800 he was united in marriage with Jane Brady, of Thorn, Yorkshire. Sarah Tanner was their eldest daughter, and was born at Sheffield the 15th of 7th month, 1807. In 1816, at the age of 45, her father was recorded as a Minister of the Gospel in the Society of Friends. In 1818, under an impression of religious duty, strengthened by manifest, providential openings, he accepted a post offered by the Emperor Alexander of Russia, to conduct farming operations on a district of waste land seven wersts from Petersburgh, on the Moscow road, and removed thither with his wife and family. This residence abroad involved considerable isolation from kindred society, and religious fellowship out of their own family; but home itself was rendered as pleasant and cheerful as possible to the children, and the counsels and prayers of their pious parents seem to have been singularly blessed.

Sarah Tanner's own more decided Christian course appears to have commenced when she was about 22 years of age. It was marked by deep conviction

for sin, a thankful acceptance of the love and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and earnest wrestlings after holiness.

In 1832 her father retired from his appointment in Russia, very different scenes of service opening before him. He was already in England, preparing for his visit of Gospel love to the English settlements of Hobart Town and Sidney, and to several Islands of the South Pacific ocean, Tahiti, Eimeo, the Sandwich Islands, &c., when his beloved wife was taken ill at Shoosharry, their Russian home, and died of fever after nine days' illness.

Thus deprived of one dear parent, and far separated from the other, Sarah Tanner's position was lonely and full of responsibility. Her eldest brother, William, who had succeeded to her father's post under the Emperor, was well fitted by his natural powers of mind and matured religious character, to sustain and cheer her; but in 1836 he left Russia unwell, and in the 11th month he died at the Isle of Wight, apart from kindred—although ministered to by kind friends—at the age of 35. The health of her only sister, Jane, also gave way, and in the 7th month of 1837, she died in peace, aged 21, and her remains were laid by those of her mother, in the little, lonely, family burial ground at Shoosharry.

With unshaken confidence in the love and care of her Heavenly Father, but in broken health and spirit,

Sarah Tanner returned to England in the spring of 1838, to meet her beloved father and her brother Charles, on their arrival from the South Seas. The joy of this re-union was chastened by past sorrow, and fresh anxiety awaited her, as her brother was evidently far from well. For nearly two years she watched over this beloved brother, through a long decline. During part of the time they were joined by their elder brother, Joshua, whose health also drooped sadly. They were journeying, accompanied by kind friends, towards the south of France, to winter there, for the benefit of Charles, when he became too ill to proceed. Their beloved father joined them at St. Germain-en-laye near Paris. He had been for several months engaged in Gospel labours on the American continent, but returned in time to cheer, for almost three months, the closing days of his faithful companion in his long voyage and ministerial labour. Charles Wheeler died on the 6th of 2nd month, 1840, aged 30 years, and his remains were brought to England and laid by those of his brother William, in the Friends' burial ground at Southampton.

Devoted still to the service of his Lord, Daniel Wheeler embarked again for America: he became unwell on the voyage, landed 4th month 28th, was nursed with the tenderest care at the house of his friend, John Clapp, New York, and there finished his course in peace on the 12th of 6th month, 1840, aged

69 years. The news of his death fell heavily on the hearts of his surviving children. Sarah Tanner was at this time watching the failing health of her brother Joshua. In the 3rd month, 1841, he died at Clifton near Bristol, aged 38 years, and was buried by the side of his brothers at Southampton.

The youngest, and only surviving brother, Daniel Wheeler, had obtained permission to resign into other hands the post in Russia, so long held by the family, and in which they had received uniform kindness and consideration. He had joined his sister in England, and they resided together for some years at White Ladies' Gate, Clifton. After a brief married life of two years, he also yielded to the same insidious disease, consumption, which had carried off his brothers. He died at Clevedon, on the 24th of 6th month, 1848, at the age of 35, and his remains rest in the Friends' burial ground at the Friars, Bristol.

Sarah Tanner was now the sole survivor of her father's house. She could reverently thank God for the mercy extended to each departed one, through the Lord Jesus Christ their Saviour; but her loving heart deeply mourned their loss.

She was married to William Tanner in 1849. Of this union, we need only say that it was full of happiness for both. Sarah Tanner combined great force of character, with deep tenderness of feeling. Her mind was richly stored, and she possessed a very discriminating

of her wakeful nights she was engaged in earnest prayer for her faithful attendants.

She was apparently unconscious for some hours before her death, and in the early morning of the 11th of 3rd month, surrounded by the various members of her husband's family, her spirit gently passed away to join, we could not doubt, that innumerable company before the throne, where so many of her beloved ones were already gathered.

Her remains were conveyed to Sidcot, and on the 17th of the 3rd month, were laid in her husband's grave, amid a sorrowing circle of relatives and friends.

"They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not '*long*' divided."

CHAPTER XIV.

Letters—Correspondence, &c.—Testimony of Bristol Monthly Meeting.

Letter from William Tanner to his mother, on leaving home for the Mediterranean.

Ship Flamer, 10 o'clock.
7th of 11th Mo. 1833.

My dear Mother,

It will be pleasant to you to know that we got comfortably here, and that the appearance of things on board is even more satisfactory than when we were here together. And now that the excitement of parting is a little over, I trust I am favoured to feel thankful for the support mercifully vouchsafed; as well as for the cheering confidence now experienced that "all is well;" and that we shall be enabled very often, during our separation one from another, renewedly to commit our souls unto Him, of whose enduring mercy and covenant love towards us, we have had so many, and such abundant proofs.

Once more, my dear parents, farewell; may the blessing of the Most High abundantly rest upon you, and sanctify every dispensation of His will to your eternal benefit.

Your's very affectionately,

W. TANNER.

Letter from George Waring to Samuel Tanner in reference to the Cruise in the Mediterranean.

Shirehampton,
Aug. 29th, 1867.

My dear Friend,

I have much pleasure in sending you dear William's letter, he seems to have retained a very pleasant remembrance of the Mediterranean cruise, and it is a gratification to me to think that I was able, in some small degree, to add to his enjoyment on that occasion. Surely never any man had a more agreeable companion than I had! With all the engaging simplicity and freshness of childhood, which he retained in a geat degree through life, William, though somewhat juvenile in appearance, was already a man as regards his decided and well digested opinions, and the extent of his information on the most important questions. Might it not be truly said of him that as a child, he was a man, and as a man, he was a child? It is true that when I first knew him he was several years past childhood, but still he was at an age when most young persons are very childish and undecided in their ideas and opinions. In perfect equanimity and angelic sweetness of temper he could not be surpassed—was very rarely equalled as far as my experience goes. A lesson for me if I had but known how to profit by it! It is said that we never know a person thoroughly till we have been a voyage with him. I had this opportunity of testing my companion's disposition most severely, during that long and miserable voyage in the Sicilan schooner Argo, from Messina to Marseilles—wretched accommodations—provisions of the

worst quality and deficient in quantity—filthy and depraved shipmates—adverse winds—long tedious calms—how could a man's temper be subjected to more severe proof? An empty stomach, even when endured for a few hours only, has often been known to force a cross word from people, usually very obliging and good tempered. But neither, during that voyage, nor on any other occasion, while absent from England, did I ever see my dear companion's temper ruffled in the slightest degree, even for a single moment. This I can positively assert, and I believe that no friend or acquaintance of William Tanner will hesitate to give full credit to what I have stated.

I beg you to excuse the freedom, or rather the presumption, of the above remarks. To quote a few words from dear William's letter to me, I will add that, when I began this note, "I had no thought of saying all this, but my pen has run away with me."

I am yours most truly,
GEORGE WARING.

Letter from William Tanner to George Waring.

Ashley Farm, Horfield,
31st XII. 1862.

My dear Friend,

I am going to employ a few minutes of this last evening of the year, in thanking thee for thy very kind, and most useful present of a lamp shade. I am at this moment, testing its value; and my wife, who has rather a strong idea of the value of another kind of shade, which a friend of hers had made for her, admits that the effect of thine is

very good. We are both much obliged for it; but to my eyes an effect is produced by this shade, in which no one else can share. By its aid our old lamp becomes possessed of the magic power of restoring the scenes of departed years; enabling me to see visions of blue waves and pebbly beaches, green and brown lizards, sea and land shells, maiden hair ferns and blue anemones, &c. &c. Better than all, it recalls the face of a dear old friend, or I should rather say friends; for ever since the happy days when we wandered about the world together, I have looked upon your family circle as one to which I was closely related, and to the members of which I might venture to hope I might one day be united in a world where there is no more sin and no more sorrow, through the love and mercy of the Lord our Saviour. I had no thought of saying all this, but my pen has run away with me. * * * *

I am, with our united love to you,

Thy affectionate friend,

Wm. Tanner.

Letter from William Tanner to his mother on his removing to Ashley Farm.

Ashley Farm, 1st mo. 4th, 1859.

My dear Mother,

I am inclined to send thee the first note written from our new habitation, to tell thee some of the thoughts and feelings which have accompanied our removal, knowing full well how much you have been interested in the important step which we have now taken. The leave

which we took of the dear old Grange, after dinner to-day, was as quiet and peaceful as it could well have been; the associations connected with it are of course very different and much more limited in my own case, than in those of dear S. and our sister Margaret; but whilst my chief remembrances of it are of a home, in which unnumbered mercies and favours were bestowed upon us for eight years in succession, I shall always associate with this, the thought of one who has passed to a better inheritance. And now as to our new home; my first and last feeling respecting it is that of thankfulness in the belief that our steps have been guided hither by the good providence of our Heavenly Father, and of humble trust that He will bless us in it. The prayer of Moses has been often in my mind the last few days, "If Thy Spirit go not with us, carry us not up hence;" but the answer to it did not occur to me until we came up to the door this afternoon, when it seemed brought forcibly before me, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest."

We had a comforting season together, after reading last evening, dear Sarah being enabled, after all the fatigues of the day, to offer praise and thanksgiving for mercies already received, and humbly to ask for more. The manner in which she has borne up under the fatigues connected with the removal, is wonderful, and such as I could scarcely have believed possible, when six months ago, I hardly dared to anticipate our entering on this home together. For this, in addition to all other mercies, I do feel that an especial debt of gratitude is due to our Great Preserver. The carrying out of the change now

effected, has led me to a fresh and serious review of the steps which were taken towards its accomplishment, and in that retrospect there has been something more than an absence of condemnation; a consciousness of having at least attempted to do right, and (as I have said before) the belief that we were preserved from coming to a wrong decision. My heart does certainly acquit me of having desired such a residence, on account of its size or style: if a house like the cottage in which we lived after our marriage could have been found in as convenient a situation, with a secluded garden, we should both greatly have preferred it; and as respects the pecuniary prudence of the step we have taken, we are satisfied that our income affords a fair margin, over and above any thing we are likely to need here: should unforeseen changes alter our position in this respect, I believe we could both of us submit cheerfully to any needful change. It has however increased the solemnity of the feeling connected with this removal, to reflect, that in all probability, this will be our last earthly home; my thoughts have passed onward to the much narrower resting place beyond; but neither has that anticipation brought with it ought of melancholy feeling, being connected as it is with the humble hope of obtaining part in another and more glorious habitation, "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." If I could have brought myself to write all this to some people, I should have needed to add an apology for its egotism and seeming self complacency, but happily it is too late in the day to begin offering apologies of that kind to thee,

I am, with our united dear love,

Thine most affectionately,

W. TANNER.

Letter of William Tanner.

My dear Friend,

Thou hast rightly judged that no kind of apology was needed for the freedom thou hast taken in writing to me. It is the very kind of freedom which I have of late been entreating my friends of Bristol meeting to use towards me, whenever from any cause they may feel prompted to do so. And if it be not in my power to afford any other kind of help, thou mayst rest assured of my loving sympathy with thee, under thy present feelings and circumstances. Thou wouldst have felt no hesitation in writing to me, if thou hadst known how very far I should be, when reading thy letter, from anything like a disposition to condemn thee. And O! if I could but bring home to thee a sense of the far greater readiness of our Father in Heaven to receive and to bless His erring children; the wall of separation which thou hast thyself been building up between thy soul and Him, would crumble to dust in a moment, and thou wouldst turn as freely as thou ever didst, to the unmerited mercy of God in Christ.

In speaking of the wall which thou hast been building, I do not allude to those sins of omission, which laid (though not necessarily) the foundation for such a wall to be built upon,—but to the manner in which thou hast allowed the remembrance of those omissions to alienate thy soul from God. Thy case, and I have known many such, and might speak of my own experience in former days as one of them—thy case is that of a child who has wandered

away from his Father's house on account of some transgression, for which the parent's forgiveness had only need to be asked, and has wandered about in the bye-paths of the wilderness, sometimes returning, it may be, to that house in the darkness of the evening, but only to look in at the window, and envy the happy family there assembled. Why does not the wanderer walk straight in among them and say, "Father I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!" In the case of an earthly parent, there may be room to doubt the father's readiness to forgive and to receive back into favour. In the case of our Father in Heaven, we know that it is not so: but the devil, taking occasion from the remorseful feeling of the sinner, induces him, even whilst admitting in the abstract the freeness of the love of God, to imagine that a certain preparation is needed on the part of those who would draw nigh. He does not tell us in so many words, that we must make ourselves acceptable to God, (that would be too plain a lie), but he induces us to believe that we have not sufficiently repented, mourned over and loathed the former condition and course of action, and that until this experience is witnessed, the alienation must continue. (This is in fact the Romish doctrine of penance), and so it comes to pass that a feeling of distrust and discomfort takes possession of the mind, in which we are tempted to believe that God has taken His Holy Spirit from us: (a most unfounded apprehension), spiritual comfort and joy are lost, and old temptations regain their force. Now I do not say that all these consequences are avoided in the case of those who at once

adopt the resolution "I will arise and go to my Father," and who truly apprehend the blessed truth, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Free and unchanging as is the love of God to us, we do of necessity incapacitate ourselves, to some extent, from enjoying His love, when we sin against Him, and it may sometimes be long ere such consequences are altogether got rid of. We must not expect too much in such a case. It may be, that as a means of benefit to ourselves, our Father may sometimes allow us to take for a time, (to our apprehension, though not as respects His gracious regard to us), the place of the hired servant, instead of that of the adopted child. All I can say to thee, my dear young friend, is—Go to Him as thou art, with as much faith in His loving-kindness as thou canst command, and cast thyself simply upon Him. If more repentance is needed, He will give it thee, and the peace, joy and strength which have been lost, shall be restored, and Christ become to thee again "the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." I trust that I may be enabled to join my prayers with thine, that thus it may be. The contents of thy letter, which I have destroyed, will remain with myself. Do not hesitate to write again whenever thou art inclined.

Thy affectionate friend,

Wm. Tanner.

Letter of William Tanner to * * * *

Ilfracombe, 23. VI. 1864.

My dear Friend,

I found thy letter here last evening, after having been in Bristol for a day or two, and afterwards at the Quarterly Meeting at Street.

No apology of any kind was needed for the freedom which thou exercised in writing to me. Even though I might be able to say nothing in reply, which could be of any service, it would be at all times a satisfaction and comfort to me to be allowed to share thy burdens with thee, to the utmost extent which is possible for me; and I can truly say that I sympathise with thee under thy present difficulty.

* * * * * *

I think that I become more and more suspicious of the correctness of the estimates which Christians form, from time to time, as to their own spiritual condition. Spiritual stock-taking is, I feel certain, a very fallacious process oftentimes, somewhat in the same way as commercial investigations of a like kind are. Gains and losses are, in both, often set down to the wrong account, and even though the general result may be correctly apprehended, the indirect causes of success or failure, are so far overlooked, that the practical lesson so important to be learnt is lost sight of. As to spiritual experience, (in that which appears to be such,) my conviction is, that multitudes of Christians would be perfectly amazed, if they really knew how much the

condition of the nervous system had had to do, from time to time, with those phases of feeling, which have been to them, such occasions of joy on the one hand, or of sorrow on the other. "What a low material view of things!" thou wilt perhaps exclaim. All I can say in answer is, that I believe it to be the simple truth. * * * *

Thou wilt not understand me as wishing to foreclose any profitable inquiry as to the causes of spiritual failure; but I have very much ceased to fear for my own safety or that of others, so long as the engagement, expressed in the words "but I follow after" is truly maintained. There are many other things of which I should like to speak, if we were together.

We expect to reach home "for good" to-morrow week. We are neither of us very strong, but have, I think, been greatly benefitted by the change. It is pleasant to feel in one's 50th year, as keen an enjoyment in "the winding shore and deepening glen," as one ever had in one's life. Perhaps *true* would have been a better word than *keen*, to have used.

* * * *

Thine very affectionately,

W. TANNER.

Verses by William Tanner.

Lines addressed to a little boy, 15 months old, who withdrew one evening from the window, where he had been gazing at the moon, and clung to his mother's side in apparent alarm, as some dark clouds passed over its surface.

One by one, thou infant watcher,
Are presented to thy view,
Visions strange in earth and heaven,
Things mysterious and new.

Objects in whose charms and beauty,
Infancy may take delight;
Other objects from whose presence,
It retreateth with affright.

One by one, as life advances,
Other visions shall appear,
Visions calling forth thy gladness,
Or inspiring thee with fear.

Heavenly orbs shall rise upon thee,
Darkening clouds shall o'er thee pass;
Many a form of life and beauty,
Soon shall wither as the grass.

Be it thine, dear infant watcher,
'Midst these ever changing things,
To behold the Sun arising,
Who has healing in His wings.

Be it thine, through His great mercy,
When these changes shall have passed,
To secure a glorious refuge,
Where shall come no wintry blast.

There the moon no more withdraweth,
Neither shall the sun go down;
There shall each redeemed spirit,
Wear an everlasting crown.

W. TANNER.

To R. A. C.

William Tanner to his Mother.

Ashley Farm, 27th of 10th mo. 1866.

My dear Mother,

The accounts we had from thee from time to time of the failing condition of our dear cousin Hannah Gregory, had prepared us for the information received this morning of her release from the suffering and weariness which have so long been her portion. We cannot but rejoice and give thanks on her account: and yet I have no doubt that the change will leave a blank in the feeling of her kind and faithful attendants, and no less so in thy own, as having been for so long a period associated with our dear cousin in the trials and in the joys of life; and as being now I suppose, almost the only survivor of those who constituted Sidcot Meeting, when thou first came into it. Well may the successive rending of these earthly ties bring afresh

into view the unspeakable value of the one tie which cannot be broken, that which binds us to the Lord our Saviour, and one to another in Him.

Should nothing unforeseen arise to prevent, I shall hope to be with you to-morrow week, which I find is the time fixed for the funeral.

Most affectionately,

WM. TANNER.

Extract of a Letter from Dr. Edward Rhodes, of Philadelphia, to Eliz. H. C.

"Dear William Tanner! I loved him as a father in Christ; he was very good to me, and I am very grateful to his bereaved wife and dear I. F. for their remembrance, and to thee for conveying it. Truly he was a man of great comprehensiveness of view on religious matters, and of that charity which faileth not. I knew well how he and your friend, lived as one man; and when I had mourned for her who will miss all his watchful devoted tenderness, and warm home affection, I turned with no less intensity of sympathy to that heart which will be thus doubly lonely, although it is cherished by the love of very many, old and young. I shall write to dear S. shortly, but if thou art sending a line to Bristol, please say that there are those, and not a few in this distant land, who are sad because she mourns, and who do not forget her when they come with their own burdens to the foot of the cross."

MATERNAL MUSINGS.

He dwelt on earth, as in a "desert land," *
Where by the God of Jacob he was found,
By Him instructed,—guided by His hand,
And shielded from "strange gods"* who there abound.

In early life the Shepherd's voice he knew,
Obeyed His call,—His precepts learned to keep,
And as in stature, and in grace he grew,
Fulfilled His mandate,—"Feed my lambs and sheep."

Attuned to sympathy,—his grateful heart,
Rejoicing in the pardoning love of God,
Sought its soul cheering influence to impart,
To those with whom the path of life he trod!

Rich in the blessings of domestic love,
Of Christian fellowship, and social ties;
And richer still in blessings from above,
A present Saviour, and a promised prize.

With cheerful step he trod life's chequered way,
Thro' storm and sunshine towards the "better land,"
And for his Master worked while it was day,
With loving service, and a willing hand.

But lo! a cloud obscured his noon-day sun,
While on him shone the light of Jesus' love,
The summons came,—his work on earth was done,
And he was numbered with the saints above.

* Deut. xxxii. 10—12.

Oh glorious exchange!—for darkness, light,
The earthly house for one that ne'er decays;
Faith's clouded vision for perfected sight,
A life of prayer, for that of endless praise.

Hushed was our bitter grief,—the Lord who gave,
Had come his rightful treasure to reclaim;
And He is ours, to succour and to save,
May all within us "bless His holy name."
2nd mo. 1867.

A Testimony of Bristol Monthly Meeting concerning William Tanner, a Minister, deceased.

Our beloved friend was the eldest son of Arthur Thomas and Mary Tanner, of Sidcot, and was born on the 15th of 5th month, 1815. His infancy and childhood were marked by a delicacy of constitution, which was never fully surmounted in after life. The remarkable thoughtfulness which ever characterised him, was seen, even in his very early years. Almost in infancy, indications were given of his tenderness of conscience, of his struggle with the evil propensities of his own heart, and of his fear of offending his Heavenly Father: and as he grew older the precious visitations of divine love were increasingly cherished by him.

Under medical advice, he spent the winter of 1833-34 in Malta, with his friend George Waring, returning home

with renovated health in the following spring. Although during his residence in Malta, he had necessarily been deprived of the privilege of social and religious intercourse with his friends, it was evident that under the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, his Christian experience had been deepened and advanced. Shortly after this period, he entered into a manufacturing business at Cheddar. In this village and the surrounding country, he was, for several years, actively engaged with some other devoted men, in promoting the religious and social improvement of the poor. He was personally acquainted with the late Hannah More, whose benevolent efforts in the neighbourhood of the Mendip Hills, are so well known; and he delighted in endeavouring to follow up some of the good works which she and her sisters had begun. He was untiring and unsparing of himself, in his exertions to benefit the poor and ignorant, by the establishment of Schools, the promotion of Temperance, and other means. He was a diligent visitor of the sick, watching with tender care over the sufferers, and skilfully administering to their wants, as well as a kind and sympathising counsellor to all who were in affliction. The remembrance of his bright example of dedication to the service of his Lord, as a very young man, is peculiarly precious to his surviving friends. It might indeed be said of him, that

——— ——— "prompt at every call,"
he watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all."

In the 22nd year of his age, he yielded to an impression of duty, under a sense of the pardoning love of Christ to himself, publicly to invite others to come taste and see that the Lord is good. He first spoke as a Minister in a Monthly Meeting at Chew Magna, referring impressively to the faith of the Shunamite woman, who, though her child was dead, could say "It is well." Under the instruction and guidance of the Holy Spirit, his gift became enlarged, and in 1839 he was recorded as a Minister by the North division of Somerset Monthly Meeting. From a very early period of his ministry, he was diligent in its exercise, and frequently held religious meetings of a public character, chiefly among the poor in his own neighbourhood.

In the year 1849 he was united in marriage to Sarah Wheeler, daughter of our late honoured friend, Daniel Wheeler. His beloved wife was peculiarly qualified to be his companion and helper in his various pursuits, and to enter into his religious interests and anxieties. As heirs together of the grace of life, their union was manifestly owned and blessed of the Lord.

On his marriage, he removed to Bristol, where he continued to reside until his death. He was remarkably enabled to adapt himself to the altered circumstances in which he was placed, on removing from the country into a large city; and we feel that his labours amongst us have been made the means of much blessing to the Church.

His clear and powerful mind, his cheerful disposition and his deeply sympathetic heart, all graciously sanctified by the Holy Spirit, proved special qualifications for the services into which he was now called. His religious engagements were of a varied character, including a journey to Norway, and several extensive visits to Friends in the North of England, in London and the neighbourhood, and in Ireland. He also held many meetings with the public, in the course of his journeys and in the vicinity of Bristol.

The Ministry of our dear friend embraced a large range of subjects, and was adapted to varied conditions of mind. Though marked by much simplicity of manner, it was rich in Christian thought, and variety of illustration, the result of deep religious experience. It was thus truly instructive and edifying, and under the awakening power of the Holy Spirit, often reached the hearts and consciences of the hearers.

Amongst the young, his labours were greatly blessed. Not only in his public ministry, but in family, or still more private intercourse, he entered into their difficulties and perplexities, with great tenderness and discrimination. Not a few of them loved him for his work's sake, and affectionately cherish his memory. In connexion with a Committee of his Quarterly Meeting, he was engaged about the year 1856, in interviews with our younger members. He entered into conversation with them, encouraging them freely to express all their feelings; and he

often referred to these occasions as having been very useful to him in the course of his Ministry, by enabling him better to place himself in the position of many of his hearers, than would otherwise have been the case.

We have no desire unduly to exalt his personal character, but would rather seek to commemorate the love and faithfulness of the Lord in raising up from time to time, instruments specially qualified for the work of the day, of whom we fully believe our late dear friend to have been one. Like his brethren, he was surrounded by many infirmities, which he was ever ready to acknowledge; but his sense of his own weakness made him only the more anxious to magnify the grace of God, and to point all to the wondrous manifestation of His love to poor sinful man in the gift of His dear Son.

The removal of our beloved friend was rather sudden. His health had always been feeble, and it was only by great care, that he was able to accomplish what he did. The very delicate health of his beloved wife occasioned him much anxiety, and he often looked forward to the probability of being left alone, a trial from which his sensitive nature greatly shrank. But it was otherwise ordered. Until the 3rd of the 11th month last, he seemed in his usual state of health. On the previous evening he had been sweetly engaged in vocal prayer in the family, asking that they "might be sheltered that night and evermore, even as the chickens are sheltered under the wing."

On the 3rd he was suddenly attacked by serious illness, which continued with but little abatement until the 8th, on which day he peacefully expired. His last audible words, fitly closing his life of faithful loving service, were "Time and strength fail me, but I would commend you to God, and to the glorious display of His love, as revealed in the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

His remains were interred at Sidcot, on the 15th of 11th month, 1866. We reverently believe that he sleeps in Jesus, and "them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

Read and approved in Bristol Monthly Meeting, held the 6th of 3rd Month, 1867.

SERMONS

BY

WILLIAM TANNER.

DURING the year 1866, the last of William Tanner's life, Sarah Tanner's feeble and declining health deprived her almost entirely of the privilege of public worship. Deeply interested in her husband's public ministry of the Gospel, she was desirous of participating in the instruction and comfort of his sermons.

To gratify this desire, and with no view, as we apprehend to any further use, William Tanner on his return from meeting, or in some intervals of the day, wrote out from memory, more than forty of these discourses. After William Tanner's decease they were entrusted to two personal friends, members of Bristol Meeting, who came to the conclusion that a selection from the number would be both interesting and in-

structive to the readers of the memoir, which Sarah Tanner was then engaged in preparing.

The first in the list does not belong to the series above described. It refers to the funeral of Jacob P. Sturge, which had taken place at King's Weston the preceding day. The sermon was written out by William Tanner, at the request of a member of J. P. Sturge's family.

Substance of an address delivered at the Friars' Meeting House, Bristol, 25th of 10th month, 1857.

My own thoughts and feelings have been carried back to the funeral occasion of yesterday; on which many had an opportunity, which others would no doubt gladly have shared, of standing beside the grave of a dear friend, who had long been accustomed to assemble with his brethren and sisters in this house to worship God. We have some of us been familiar with the thought that this dear friend would no more be seen to occupy his accustomed seat amongst us, and would no more take the part which he had long taken in the affairs of our religious society, and in a variety of things connected with the benefit of the world at large: but we have none the less occasion to mourn his loss.

I desire not on this, or any like occasion, to utter words of eulogy. I have often felt that it does especially become us to suspend our human judgment in the case of those who have passed beyond its reach;—passed to the judgment of Him, who knows us far better than we know ourselves, or than we can know one another. It is not for us to decide at how late a period of the day of life, our Heavenly Father may be pleased to call back to His house, those who have manifestly lived a life of sin: neither is it for us to determine that what have seemed to us the evidences of a living faith, have found acceptance at the bar of God. It does not however follow from this that we are not to receive warning from the dangers into which we see many of our fellow pilgrims fall, or that we should not receive encouragement from the deliverance of which we see others availing themselves.

And now my desire is that we may all receive from the life and death of our dear friend, those lessons of instruction which they are so well calculated to set before us. I doubt not that many here can unite in a feeling of thankfulness on account of his release from the prolonged, and, at times, severe suffering which was his portion: that what we have witnessed or heard of that suffering from time to time, has led us to feel that it would be cause for great thankfulness whenever He, in whose hand are the lives of all men, should be pleased to call the weary pilgrim to his rest.

I have sometimes felt that there might be a peculiar difficulty in apprehending the instruction to be derived from his life. To a superficial observer, he may have

appeared to be a man so diligently engaged in his worldly calling, that it was difficult to understand how he could be at liberty to exercise fervency of spirit in the service of his Lord. Such an observer would have failed to comprehend that this very diligence might have resulted from the exercise of Christian principle. He would have failed to understand the light in which, as I believe, our dear friend regarded his earthly possessions, and the right appropriation of them, which he sought to make.

To others it may have seemed unaccountable, that if his affections were really set on things above, he should have been so silent regarding them. It is true that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," but it is not true that the deepest feelings are those which find the readiest utterance in words. I may confess that sometimes when I have witnessed the deep interest of our dear friend in those over whom his heart constantly yearned, the younger men, and the younger women, of this meeting; and when I listened to the earnest words in which he did sometimes give expression to these feelings, I did long that he could more freely find utterance for them,—that those lips could have been more frequently unsealed. I say not this as any derogation from his Christian faith and faithfulness: but rather as feeling that it would often have been a relief and strength to himself, and a means of instruction to others, if his heart could have been more fully opened to them.

It is indeed a very satisfactory and instructive thing when the testimony of the life corresponds with that which is borne in sickness and in death. I can never

forget the instruction which seemed to me to be ministered to those who stood around that bed of suffering. It was very striking to see one who had been so long and so actively engaged in the affairs of life, somewhat suddenly withdrawn from them, and yet manifesting so little anxiety to return, and appearing ready at once, if it might be, to close his connexion for ever with them. I have no doubt that the natural diffidence of his mind co-operated with the effects of severe suffering, in preventing him, oftentimes, from rejoicing to the extent he might otherwise have done, in the prospect before him: but there was no misgiving as to the foundation on which his faith rested, or as to the sufficiency of the grace which he sought to partake of.

I remember well the earnestness with which he one day said to me, "I have read the promises, and I believe them;" and again in words—which I ventured to repeat elsewhere, and which were heard by others besides myself—"I feel myself to be one (or as one) of the Israelites whose door-posts are sprinkled with blood." I have no doubt that it was in this faith of our dear friend, in which he did not then participate for the first time, that the source of his spiritual strength was found; that it sufficed for his support under many a trial and difficulty of life, and that by it he was borne at last above the swellings of Jordan. In receiving Christ as his passover, he was brought to a spiritual participation in the benefits of His death, and this was to him the true supper of the Lord. There was no disposition on his part to judge hardly of those among his Christian brethren, who, whilst admitting this to be the

essential experience, may nevertheless think it right to have recourse to the outward bread and wine, on the ground of its being an ordinance of Christ: but for himself, I think I am warranted in saying, that he desired nothing more than a spiritual participation in the body which was broken, and in the blood which was shed for us.

I long that in thus giving expression to the thoughts and feelings which pressed heavily on my mind, as we sat down together here this morning, I may not turn away the minds of any from that particular source of instruction which they may now have found, either in the event to which I refer, or otherwise. I have no doubt that to many who have arrived at about the same period of life at which this dear friend was removed, or whose years already exceed the sum of his, there is felt to be a fresh and loud call to stand prepared for the final summons.

Others of us in earlier life may well feel the importance of our being prepared to fill the places of those who are being taken from us. We have had a great stripping of late in the ranks of those who take a prominent part in the affairs of our religious society: and it is no marvel if an anxious inquiry does arise as to where, and from whom, a succession is to come. It is well that we should dwell upon such considerations, not in such a way as to produce undue discouragement, or to paralyze our efforts, but rather that we may be led afresh to consider what return we are making, and are called to make, for all the love wherewith Christ our Lord hath loved us.

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum; we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."*

I believe that the declaration thus made in the epistle to the Hebrews, may be regarded as setting forth not only the sum and substance of the teaching contained in that epistle, but also, to a large extent, the sum and substance of the ministry of the apostles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—so careful were they to preach to others, not themselves, but Christ Jesus their Lord, and themselves as their servants for Jesus' sake,—to exalt Him in the view of others, as the great sin offering, and the great High Priest, as the glorified Head of His church.

It was to the single testimony which they bore to Christ, under the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, that we may trace the wonderful success which attended their ministry, the ingathering of large multitudes both of Jews and Gentiles, and the obedience to the faith which was manifested by even a great company of the Jewish priests. It will be found that the success which has attended the professed ministry of the Gospel in succeeding times, has been very much proportioned to the extent to which its ministers have, in like manner, preached Christ to the people.

* This discourse is without date.

When in the days of darkness which followed, in the history of the church, men began again to pitch a "worldly tabernacle," and to direct attention to outward ordinances, their preaching ceased to be effectual. When again our protestant reformers stood forth to dispel the darkness which had arisen, the success of their labours was proportioned to the extent to which they were engaged to preach Christ and Him alone. So too in the case of our forefathers in religious profession, the blessing which rested on their labours was largely connected with their having been engaged to call the people away from their dependence upon man, and to direct them to Christ.

As regards the present condition and prospect of things amongst us, my persuasion has long been, that if ever this religious society is to renew its youth, it must be by our coming to build on the same foundation—by our being baptized by the one Spirit into the one body, made to drink into the one Spirit, and prepared for a living and united participation in the body which was broken, and in the blood which was shed for us.

I have felt it a solemn thing this evening to think of what is implied in preaching not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord,—of how possible a thing it is to preach ourselves under the name of preaching Christ, and to mistake a feeling of personal interest in others, for an earnest desire to win souls to Christ.

I feel more especially engaged to press upon us the inquiry as to what we do personally know of the grace and truth of the Gospel.

Many of us have had the privilege of Christian care and teaching in earlier years. Has that leaven continued to work until there begins to be a promise of the whole lump being leavened? Or has the leaven of other and adverse influences been at work? I do not feel excused without saying that the most dreadful sight my eyes have ever looked upon, has been the breaking down of a young mind under evil influence. I have known indeed what it is to watch the progress of bodily disease in beloved ones. I have seen the manly form bowed under its influence—one feature of the countenance after another, affording indications of its insidious working. I have watched the progress of decay in disease and in death, until almost all traces of the former loveliness had disappeared. But I have seen, as you have seen, in many of these cases, evidence afforded that the breaking down of the earthly tabernacle was but in order that the immortal spirit should become an inhabitant of one of those many mansions eternal in the heavens.

And in any case the mere destruction of bodily health and vigour will not compare in dreadfulness with the breaking down of man's moral and spiritual nature—with the change which is witnessed, when one good principle and resolution after another, gives way under the power of temptation. Conscience, which at one time was so tender, then becomes hard and insensible, the spiritual eye dim, and the spiritual ear dull of hearing, until at length the highest and holiest of all human influences, that of a mother's love, and of a mother's prayers, is cast aside and trampled under foot, as if it were a useless thing.

I would fain hope that there are none present to whom such a description fully applies, but let none be saying in their own strength that these things shall never come upon them. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is indeed all-sufficient to reach the spiritual need of those who have wandered furthest from Him: but it is a vain thing for any to resolve that they will pursue the path of sin for a time, and then turn to the acceptance of His free mercy; for the unwillingness which hinders them from coming now, so far from lessening, will increase as they go on. Let us never confound these two things, the readiness of Christ to receive the sinner, and the readiness of the sinner to receive Christ. * * * *

I had afterwards to speak in terms of encouragement to those who were humbly seeking to learn in the school of Christ, of sympathy with them in their mental doubts and difficulties, of the call there is for labourers in the harvest field, of the extent to which the young had in former days, and particularly at the rise of our society, been qualified for service, of the peace and joy which should be the portion of those who should respond to such a call,—of the need there is for them to go forth in simple dependence on their Lord, and in the spirit of those remarkable words of George Fox, "We are nothing, Christ is all."

Third Month, 10th, 1866.

"I will hear what God the Lord will speak:" was the resolution expressed by the Psalmist on one occasion; and similar to it was that of one of the prophets: "I will stand upon my watch, and set me in the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." And in close agreement with these resolutions of the Lord's servants of old, was the charge given in succession to each of the seven churches of Asia, as recorded in the book of Revelation: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The hearing and attentive ear is made use of in the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments, to represent the condition of those who are prepared to receive communications of Divine truth: whilst the opposite condition is described by the deaf ear, and the stopping and turning away of the ears. The unstopping of deaf ears was a part of the description given by the prophet Isaiah of the wonders of the Gospel day. Those words were in part fulfilled by the works of bodily healing which formed so large a portion of the miracles wrought by our blessed and holy Redeemer. And they have received, and are still receiving an additional fulfilment in the work which is wrought by His grace and Spirit, in the hearts of all who truly receive Him as their Lord and Saviour. The commencement of that work is described as the hearing of His voice by those, at the door of whose hearts He stands and knocks. And the communion after-

wards enjoyed by those who receive this Heavenly guest, is set forth in the parable of the Sheepfold, where the sheep are spoken of as hearing the Shepherd's voice, and following Him; and as distinguishing His voice from that of strangers.

And surely my dear friends, there is as much need now, as ever there was for the exercise of this spiritual hearing. It would even seem to me as if in this day of multiplied engagements, and of many voices, there was peculiar need for us to be on our guard, lest we fail to hear the voice of Him who is speaking to us from heaven, warning us of our danger, inviting us to find rest and peace within the enclosure of His fold; and uttering words of counsel, comfort, and instruction, suited to the needs of all. It is truly a day of multiplied engagements, and in which many voices are to be heard, sometimes it may be, calling us in opposite directions at the same time. Business cares and anxieties, press heavily on many, and there are also household cares, more or less connected with them. There are some whose engagements throughout the week are of so pressing a character, that when the day of rest, and the hour of worship comes, it seems almost as if the worldly voices were sounding in their ears, and would drown the voice of Him who is waiting to speak to them from heaven. And I speak of this, not by way of blame, but rather of sympathy, with those who are longing to hear other voices than those of earth, but who find it difficult to shut out these distractions.

The heavenly voice is often far less loud than those which are around us in the world. And there are some

of these of a very different kind from those of which I have spoken,—voices which speak to us of higher interests than those of earth, but whose character and effect may nevertheless be of a questionable kind. Religion itself, and all the truth connected with it, are now being subjected to the most searching scrutiny, in some cases in a reverent, and in others in an irreverent spirit. There are some who are greatly alarmed by this state of things. I confess that my own hope is that good will be brought out of it, in the over-ruling power and providence of God, to the hearts and minds of those who are preserved in a lowly and watchful condition. But whether so or not, there is great bewilderment arising from the many voices which are to be heard speaking of these things, and there is therefore additional need for us to take care that we do not cease to distinguish the voice of the true Shepherd.

But after all, do we not find that whether our outward circumstances are favourable or unfavourable, the great difficulty of all is to be found in our own hearts? It is there that the tumult of contending passions and desires arises, which prevents many from listening to the voice of Him, who may long have been standing and knocking at the door of their hearts. It is this tumult which prevents others of us from listening as attentively as we might do to the disclosure of those purposes of love, which our Father in heaven has in store for us.

But there is a further complaint to be heard from some amongst us, that when they have listened, nothing has been heard, that they have not been sensible of those visitations of Divine love to their souls, of which others

speak. I believe that a great deal of harm has been done by exaggerated ideas in regard to the nature of these visitations. There are some who are only too content to wait for some such extraordinary visitation, as that by which Saul of Tarsus was smitten to the earth. And perhaps, all the while, they are overlooking and disregarding those gentle intimations, by which the Lord our Saviour is seeking to bring them back from their wanderings, to the enjoyment of His peace and rest.

There have indeed been from time to time Divine visitations to the souls of men, of a very extraordinary character: but I think the whole history of the church shows that they have been rather the exceptions than the rule. Sometimes a conviction takes possession of the mind which was scarcely at the time perceived to have come from God, but which, as it was yielded to, has had the effect of changing the whole character and course of action. In other cases, some outward event of Divine Providence has been the turning point. And we can some of us testify to that which has often been spoken of,—that a few words of Holy Scripture, with which we may have been so familiar, that we have heard them again and again, without any impression being produced, have, nevertheless, been brought to our minds in some seasons of trial, or difficulty, or danger, with such living power, that they have seemed to be spoken into our ears as by the voice of the Lord. And in speaking of the analogy afforded by our bodily senses, as illustrating these things, it is important to bear in mind, that the disused sense soon loses its power, whilst that which is kept in lively exercise, is greatly increased.

May we each of us bear in mind the solemn truth, which is applicable to the use which we make of all the bestowments of our Heavenly Father's hand: "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given: and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."

On the occasion of a Marriage, 9th of 5th mo. 1866.

"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church," writes the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians, in reference to that close and intimate union between Christ and His church, which he compares with the marriage covenant and relationship. He had just before spoken of the duty of Christians to be subject one to another, but of wives in particular to be subject to their husbands, as the church is to Christ, and had addressed to husbands the solemn charge to "love their wives even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

And this charge had been followed by a further comparison of the oneness between Christ and His church, to that close relationship of married life, in which the husband should feel that his wife had become a part of himself, the words being quoted from Genesis, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother to cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh." And then turning again to the spiritual union to which he had referred, he says:—

"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." And as these words have been in my remembrance on the present occasion, I have been led to the reflection that seeing the marriage covenant is so clearly an ordinance of God, and is made use of as an illustration of that higher covenant which God has made with His people in Christ, it has surely been well for the Christian church to connect the celebration of this marriage covenant with a solemn act of worship.

We have no direction given us in this matter in the Scriptures of the New Testament. In this, as in so many other things, the church has been left freely to exercise its liberty. But in view of the solemn sanctions of marriage to which I have referred, it is surely well that it should be connected with an act of solemn worship. It is not needful that we should regard marriage as a Sacrament, as one part of the professing church has been accustomed to do. I believe that the idea of sacramental efficacy arose, when the life of religion was at a very low ebb in the church. I am not speaking of the continuance of the initiatory rite of Baptism, or of the belief that the Supper was an ordinance of perpetual obligation,—but of the disposition which arose, when Christians had begun to lose sight of the solemn duty of consecrating themselves and their whole lives to the Lord's service,—the disposition to regard particular acts as having such a sanctity connected with them, that they might be made a substitute for holiness of life and conduct.

But if, on the one hand, we have been brought to recognise the great truth, that the whole life of the

Christian should be dedicated to the service of his Lord, we may well be led on the other, to feel that some acts in particular, have so special an importance connected with them, that it behoves us to seek for special supplies of grace and favor from on high, in connexion with them. And when, in regard to marriage, we consider how powerful an influence for good or for evil it often exercises on the whole after-life, we may well feel that it is good for those who enter into such a covenant as has been made here to-day, to draw near to the sacred footstool in earnest prayer, that a blessing from on high should rest upon their union; and that it is well too for those who love them, and desire their welfare, to unite with them in thus drawing near to their Father in heaven. And I rejoice to believe that it has been even thus with many of us here this morning.

I believe that many of the present company, who do not usually assemble with us at this our usual hour and place of worship, have not come hither from mere motives of curiosity, but have been prepared to unite with us in desire that the Divine blessing may be extended to those who have here taken each other in marriage. I believe that such a prayer has been united in, not only by their immediate friends and relatives, but that from many others, and from many a lowly dwelling, where the influence of the dear friend who is about to go out from amongst us has been felt, an earnest prayer has gone up this morning, that the union, now formed, may be of that close and intimate character, which the

apostle describes, and that the Divine blessing may not only rest upon it through life, but that when the solemn hour arrives, of which they just now spoke when death shall separate them, that union may be known to outlive the destruction of all earthly hopes and joys.

And whilst desiring such blessings for them, we may well be led to turn to the consideration of whether we know any thing of that spiritual union with Christ, to which the marriage covenant is compared by the apostle, and of which he says in another epistle: "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." I do often feel that we cannot be too thankful that the great truths of the Heavenly kingdom are not only brought home to our understandings in Holy Scripture, by means of the most simple illustrations, but that they are also set before us under figures which do so strongly appeal to our human love and sympathy.

There is no one in whose mind any trace of humanity remains, but can understand something of what is meant, when the love of the father for his children is spoken of, though it is impossible for any of us to rise to the full understanding of that love which is set before us, when God reveals Himself to us as our Father in heaven. And again, how great is the condescension when He is pleased to reveal His love under the representation of that which exists between those who are truly joined to each other in the covenant of marriage, so full of blessing as it is to all who rightly enter upon it. It was even thus that God was pleased to reveal Himself to us in Christ. There was

seen in Him a wondrous union between the Divine and human natures. For whilst the very fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him, there was also a perfect participation witnessed in our human joys and sorrows. Suffering was endured for us by Him, such as we have no adequate conception of, and there was surely included in it, the bearing of our sins. And in the agony thus endured for us, and in the atonement made upon the cross, there was laid a foundation for a true spiritual union between Himself and His people, which was thus described under the figure of the marriage relationship.

What then do we know, each one of us for himself, of a participation in this high and blessed relationship? Has Christ become the Bridegroom of souls to us? It is a solemn thing to look over a large company, such as this, and to think of all the varied spiritual needs existing among them. We all of us have need of that great spiritual deliverance and help, provided for us in the Gospel of Christ, by reason of our having broken the holy law of God, and of our great and varied weakness.

There is many a burdened heart in this assembly, cheerful as its general aspect is. There are here, it may be, hearts burdened with the guilt of sin; and others bearing burdens of a different kind, and I would that it might be given us here, this morning, to come and lay these burdens down at the foot of the cross. I desire that during the remaining portion of the time which we may spend together in this house, we may all be engaged in drawing near afresh to God in prayer, asking for ourselves, as well as for those in whose welfare we have been

led to take an especial interest this morning, that His favour and blessing may be vouchsafed to us, that His sustaining grace may be extended, amidst all the varying experience of the remaining portion of our earthly pilgrimage, and that through His redeeming love and mercy in Christ Jesus our Lord, there may be granted to us a participation in the eternal inheritance, provided for His children and people in heaven.

Fifth Month 13th, 1866.

"The voice said 'Cry.' And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

Such were the representations adopted by the prophet Isaiah, and which were repeated by the apostle Peter, in one of his epistles, in regard to the fleeting and uncertain nature of human life, and of earthly possessions, as contrasted with the all-enduring character of the goodness and the grace which God had revealed to man. Truly we do not need the voices of prophets and apostles, to tell us that every thing around us, and that we ourselves are changing

and passing away. Whether we give heed to them or not, we are everywhere surrounded by the evidences of change and decay. The period of human life is seen to be altogether uncertain. Some are cut off in their very early days, even as we may have seen of late, and many a time before, the young leaves and buds of spring, swept to the ground by the rough winds which have blown upon them, before they had time to open. Others again, are suddenly called hence in the midst of the active engagements of middle life; whilst those who have outlived the storms of the spring, summer, and autumn, yield at length to the wintry blast. Life itself, and its possessions, constitute a most uncertain tenure: and that which seems to us the most secure, is often swept away as in a moment.

And yet it will be to us of no avail to recognise all this uncertainty, if we be not brought to a living participation in that which the prophet described as the word of "the Lord which endureth for ever," and of which the apostle further says, "and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." I say a living participation, for there is the possibility of our concerning ourselves with spiritual things, and being none the better for it. There was another striking figure made use of by our blessed Lord, at the close of His sermon on the mount, as setting forth the contrast between stable and unstable things,—that of houses built upon the sand, and of houses built upon the rock. He was not there speaking of the difference between those who concerned themselves with earthly things on the one hand, and with heavenly things on the other. Both the classes to whom he referred

concerned themselves, to a certain extent, with spiritual things, the one being composed of such as heard the word of God and did it not, and the other of those who both heard the word and did it. It is very instructive too to remember, that our blessed Lord sometimes spoke of earthly things, in a manner which implied the possibility of their being so used, and occupied with, as to become instrumental in promoting our eternal welfare. In a certain figurative sense they should be the means of preparing us in some sort for "eternal habitations." Truly it is not for us, even those of us whose circumstances might seem fitted to induce such feelings, it is not for us to indulge in melancholy musings over the fleeting character of earthly things. It is for us rather to give thanks in the remembrance of all the good gifts of our Heavenly Father's hand. It is for us to occupy diligently and faithfully, and as far as we can rejoicingly, with all which yet remains to us of earthly good. And yet at the same time it must be our care to look beyond the temporal benefits bestowed, and to seek a true participation in that which changes not.

BATH.—Sixth Month, 1866.

"Come and see," were the words uttered by the living creatures whom the apostle John beheld standing around the throne of God, as the seals of the heavenly mysteries were opened one after another. And these few and simple

words may be regarded as fitted to express the invitation addressed by the church, in heaven and on earth, to the seeking souls of men, to the weary and heavy laden, and to those who are hungry and athirst—the invitation to come, taste, and see how good the Lord is. The single word "come," seems to have in it the very essence of the gospel message, as it was addressed in the first instance by our Lord to the people, and then by those who had been made to rejoice in His love, to others who were round about them. Our Lord's invitation to the weary and the thirsty souls, was to come unto Himself, and the burden of the apostles' ministry was to direct others to Him.

Such an invitation had in effect been given by the Most High, in the days of old, to His rebellious children, and it was proclaimed with still greater power and clearness by Him who had Himself come to seek and to save that which was lost. Such an invitation was in remarkable contrast with the languge held out by those who were ready to thank God that they were not as other men were, and to say to a fellow-sinner, "stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou."

This invitation to come, was given freely to the most sinful and defiled, by Him who was Himself "holy, harmless, and separate from sinners." And it was repeated by those who had themselves come to Christ, to others who had like need of His help and blessing. We read that when Philip declared to Nathaniel: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph:" Nathaniel answered,

"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and that Philip replied in the very words recorded by the apostle John in the book of Revelation, "come and see." So again, when the woman of Samaria had listened to the remarkable words which our Lord addressed to her at Jacob's well, and had found how well He was acquainted with her own personal history, she returned to the city and addressed to the men of Samaria the invitation: "Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?"

We find too a corresponding feeling of desire to come and see Christ on the part of some who heard of Him. Certain Greeks who had come up to one of the feasts in Jerusalem, applied to one of the disciples, saying, "We would see Jesus."

It was evidently the gracious design of our Father in heaven, that the gospel invitation should flow on from one to another, and from one country to another. And it is a very humiliating thing to consider, to how large an extent this gracious design has been frustrated; so that now, after so many centuries have passed, whole nations of men are living in absolute heathenism, and multitudes in professedly Christian lands, are in a condition very little removed from heathenism. Such considerations are well fitted to bring home to us a sense of our individual responsibility, and to lead us to inquire whether we have received the message for ourselves, and if so, whether we are truly seeking to extend its influence to others. I have felt the desire, that we who have met together in this place to-day, and those who may meet here from time to

time to worship God, may have such inquiries profitably raised in our minds, and that the weary and heavy laden may here receive encouragement to come unto Him, who waits to supply our need out of His own fulness.

It cannot be but that in the present company, there are those who have need of help and blessing, such as the Lord our Saviour is waiting to bestow. We have some of us had an abundance of earthly blessing bestowed upon us, and we have much to be thankful for in that respect. But even the best of the gifts of an outward kind, which have been bestowed upon us, have failed to satisfy our need. And we have seen too how unstable and uncertain is our participation of earthly good. The moth, the rust, and the thief have already destroyed much in which we once delighted, and the change will go on until there shall remain to us no more participation in the things of earth. And wherefore is it that we do not turn with greater readiness to lay hold of the heavenly treasure? How is it that we are so slow to receive the gracious invitation of our Lord to come unto Him? Is it so with any that they shrink from the the idea of accepting an invitation, like that of the woman of Samaria, "Come and see a man that told me all things that ever I did?" Is there an unwillingness to have the deeds of the past brought to light, lest they should be made manifest? It is in vain that we seek to hide any thing from Him. And it is He who knows us as we are, and is perfectly acquainted with all our sinfulness, who is extending the invitation to come and receive peace and pardon from Him.

There may be others here who find it difficult to believe, that the gospel message is for them. They have never yet found, it may be, the peace and rest of which others speak, in their endeavours to come to Christ. It is difficult for us to rise to the conception of the fulness of the love which is made manifest in Christ. We may have seen and felt something of the difficulty of obtaining man's forgiveness, and we do not readily comprehend how infinitely greater is the love of God to us His erring children.

But if there be need on the one hand for some to inquire wherefore they have not COME; there is surely occasion for others of us, to ask ourselves how it is that we have been so little prepared to invite others, to come to the feast of which we have partaken. Can we say, as the servants in the parable are represented to have said to the Lord of the feast: "It is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room?" We may have given the invitation, but in such a manner that it was not likely to find access to the hearts of others. We know how great a difference there is in the success of efforts which men make to induce others to adopt opinions of different kinds. We must have seen how much often depends on bringing a loving influence to bear. And this is very especially the case as regards those who would make known to others the great love of God to man. Their calling is none other than that of winning souls to Christ.

I am amongst you here this morning as a weary pilgrim, who has often great need of seeking rest to his

own soul,—who has been permitted again and again to partake of the rest which the Lord our Saviour gives; and it is with me to invite those who are conscious of a similar need to come afresh to Christ; and those also who have been brought to rejoice in the sense of His love and goodness, to seek, as far as in them lies, to draw others to Him.

SIXTH MONTH, 1866.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all His people."

We may often have heard these words of the psalmist repeated amongst us, when assembled as we are here to-day, professedly to worship God. And they might well be adopted by us from week to week, and, to some extent, as we awaken morning by morning, to the remembrance of past mercies, and to the enjoyment of the love and favour still extended to us by our Heavenly Father. I believe there is a very close, an inseparable connexion, between a thankful acknowledgment of His goodness, and a true participation in, and enjoyment of it. We have heard the comparison this morning, between a company of Christian

worshippers, and the multitudes of destitute and hungry people who gathered around our Lord in the wilderness, and whom He condescended to supply with bread. There is, I think, no idea more often present to my own mind, as we gather here from week to week, than that of a hungry company. I presume not to judge, as to how far the description of hunger applies to us in that blessed sense, which implies a readiness to receive the food which our Lord and Saviour, in His great compassion, waits to bestow upon us. But it is impossible to look over such a company as this, from the little children to the aged pilgrims, and including as it does the most diverse conditions, without feeling that there is amongst us a great and varied need, such as no wisdom or power of man can supply. It might seem, at first sight, as if the destitution must be greater in the case of a company like this, sitting down in silence, and without any pre-arranged supply for our wants, than in the case of other congregations of Christians around us, in which a stated and regular provision of some kind is made, with a view to the instruction of those assembled. But I believe it to be true alike in the one case as in the other, that no means exist of affording a supply adequate to the need of the worshippers, other than that which comes from the Lord our Saviour, in whose name we profess to gather.

There is great comfort in the belief which has been expressed, that His gracious design towards us may still find expression in the words, "I will not send them away empty, lest they faint by the way." But on the other hand, what a humiliating thing it is, to compare that

design, with the result actually witnessed, in the case of companies of worshippers, who meet and separate from time to time, many of them, as it is to be feared, without any sensible participation in the enjoyment provided for them. How stands the case with us, after spending perhaps an hour and a half together? How many will there not be of the company assembled this morning, who will depart hence, feeling as if they were sent empty away?

I believe it would be a very profitable inquiry for us, as to how it comes to pass, that the gracious design of our Lord is frustrated to the extent which it is, by our failure to receive the blessing provided :—provided that the inquiry have reference, not to any speculative considerations bearing upon others, but rather to ourselves individually. At the same time, the inquiry should not be altogether restricted to that which is personal to ourselves. The very idea of united worship, implies that we have a part to act in relation to others. I do not believe it is possible for a number of persons, who have no real interest in the great truths of religion, to mingle with others on such occasions, without producing more or less of a deadening effect; as on the other hand, the silent exercise of many a humble worshipper, may be blest to those with whom he is assembled. And there is a part assigned, though a very inferior part to that which man has often assigned to it, to human instrumentality in the edification of the church; even as when the multitudes were fed, the bread which had been blessed, and multiplied, and broken, was given to the disciples, to hand to the companies seated on the grass.

I have no desire as an individual, to escape the force of the inquiry as to how far the comparatively unedifying character of some of our meetings, may be due to mistakes which may have been made on the part of those who have been called to minister: either by undue withholding or the reverse, or as to the character of that which is communicated. But after we may have made the fullest admission as to the loss which may have been sustained through such means, the chief inquiry must still be, as to our individual failure to receive the help and blessing, which our Lord would have dispensed to us, if we had been ready to receive it. And I believe that one cause of that failure, will be found to consist in the want of a grateful and thankful recognition of that which may have been before bestowed. The want of that recognition, applies to some extent to temporal blessings. We have some of us felt at times, in regard to the enjoyment provided for us, that an overflowing cup has been given us to drink; and the same figure might have been made use of by us at other times, in reference to the trials meted out to us. But if, in addition to these, the cup of thanksgiving had been partaken of, as it should have been, how much more largely would these varying experiences have ministered to our true happiness and welfare!

And then in regard to spiritual mercies, has there not been a still greater want of grateful acknowledgment of the blessings dispensed, and above all, of that great manifestation of the love of God which He has made to man in the Gospel of His beloved Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? It were well for us if, dispensing as we do

with the outward symbols of the body which was broken, and of the blood which was shed for us, we were more often engaged in such a remembrance of the offering made for us, as would prepare us to say with the apostle: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? And it were well for us, if we were more often brought to a united consideration of that which is due from us, in return for the abundant mercy dispensed, so that we might together seek for grace and strength, to render the service which we acknowledge to be due, and to pay the vows which we may have made unto the Lord.

We need to come again and again to the acceptance of the love which flows so freely forth towards us, and to seek in return, to consecrate ourselves, our time, our talents, our joys, our sorrows, and our united participation in the love of God, to the service of Him to whom we acknowledge that more than all which we can render, is for ever due.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE, Sixth Month, 1866.

"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

We are doubtless all of us familiar with these words, which were addressed by our Blessed and Holy Redeemer to His immediate followers, and through them to all who should, in after times, believe in Him through their word. But I believe that if we truly understand their meaning, if we truly participate in the experiences which they describe, they will recur to us again and again, with all the force and freshness of a new revelation.

There are few things more remarkable in the experience of the Lord's children, than the manner in which the most familiar words of Holy Writ, and the truths in which they have been instructed from early childhood, are brought afresh to their minds, from time to time, with living power and freshness. Those who may be placed in circumstances of trial, temptation or difficulty, open their Bibles, as if by chance upon words which are received by them, as they deserve to be, as a voice from heaven: or again such words are heard by them in the place of worship or elsewhere, or they arise perhaps in their minds whilst they are engaged in their ordinary avocations, or whilst they are walking by the way, and are sometimes

viewed by them in a light in which they have never been seen before. And something of the same kind is witnessed by well ordered minds, as regards the outward displays of Divine love and goodness. Our hearts must be cold indeed, if the returning light of morning, the beauties spread out around us at this time of the year in particular; and the beauty and benefit which spring, summer, autumn and winter, each in its turn, brings with it, do not sometimes impress us with a new and lively sense of the love and kindness of the great Creator and Preserver of all.

In the minds of many of the younger part of this company, one idea has been uppermost of late, that of returning to the homes from which they have for some time been absent. It is associated with the thoughts presented to them the first thing in the morning, and the last at night; and I trust that to many of these, this return to their homes will be attended with a sense of new enjoyment, and that in the society of those whom they most love, it will be given them to find new evidence of the kind and gracious provision which their Father in heaven has made for them.

And oh, dear friends, it would be well for us if the thought of home was more welcome to us, as regards the spiritual home which has been provided for us; both as respects the perfection of that provision made for us in a world where there is no more sorrow, sin or temptation, and also as respects the refuge provided for us here in Him, who is now manifesting Himself as the dwelling place of His people, even as He has done in all generations. He manifested Himself

thus in the days of the former covenant, and also in the words of another figure, as dwelling with His people, with the lowly and contrite ones.

We find the like companionship promised by the Lord our Saviour to His people. I know not how any stronger representation of the eternal Deity of the Son of God, could have been made, than by the assurances which He gave His followers of being with them always, even unto the end of the world, and of being in some special sense, among those who should gather in His name. It is cause for humble thankfulness, when those who gather thus together, feeling themselves poor, and weak and helpless, are permitted afresh to realize a sense of His being among them, even as He was in the little companies of those who were gathered together in the evenings of those first days of the week, when coming in among them, though the doors were shut, He uttered the words, "Peace be unto you."

I am one of those who believe that we have done well to adopt so simple a form of worship as that which we observe here;—by sitting down before the Lord in silence, as those who feel that they have nothing of their own to offer unto Him, and that their expectation should be from Him alone. I believe that in the case of other bodies of Christians, among whom the services of the congregation devolve to so large an extent upon one man, there is great danger of the people looking to him rather than unto Christ. And I think that many of us have found it a profitable thing to meet together without any such provision, and to have our attention thus singly directed unto Christ. On the other hand, we may sometimes have been

in danger of undervaluing, and setting too much aside, that small portion of help which we are capable of rendering one to another. The very sense of our common need, should itself be a means of preparing us to unite one with another in seeking to the Lord for His help and blessing. We must not overlook the powerful influence which we exert one upon another for good or for evil. That influence is felt everywhere, at home, at school, in our places of business, and in our seasons of recreation. Each one of us, older or younger, is constantly acting upon others, and being acted upon by them. Some of the younger part of this company could tell of the power which association with others has exerted upon them. And we know well how dependent we all are on the sympathy of others, and above all of those whom we love best, in the various pursuits and engagements of life. Nor can we lay aside these human sympathies, whilst seeking to follow the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, without suffering loss.

Many a one who is seeking to enter upon, or to pursue the path which leadeth unto life, might be greatly helped by free communion with others, who have had more experience of the way. It is not true indeed that we speak most freely of that which we feel the most deeply. The very reverse of this is often the case. Nevertheless there is a right place for such communing. We need to exercise great care in the choice of our acquaintance, and in the formation of our friendships; and there is especial need for such care in making choice of friends, to whom we may unburden our hearts and minds upon these great concerns of religion. Nevertheless we may derive a certain amount

of help from such disclosures. And moreover, if such communing be of the right kind, it will bring those who enter upon it, afresh to feel the powerlessness of man in regard to this great work of religion, and will prepare us for that exercise of united prayer, to which the assurance applies: "If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

It is good to be brought on these occasions of public worship into feeling one with another, in regard to our varied conditions and wants. There may be those here amongst us, who know little or nothing as yet of the things of which I speak; of gathering in the name of Jesus, of feeling His presence to be in the midst, and of uniting with others in asking for spiritual help and blessing in His name. There are others who have known what it is to rejoice in such experiences, but who are conscious of living very far below their privileges in regard to these things. It is for us, as far as we are prepared to do so, to unite in extending to those who are afar of, not the word of harsh censure, but of loving invitation, and to unite in humble earnest supplication that such as these may be brought nigh, and that we ourselves may be quickened to a more lively faith, and to the rendering of more loving service to our Lord.

BRIDGEWATER, Sixth Month, 1866.

"He hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God."

It is cause for thankfulness and rejoicing, when an acknowledgment like this arises in our hearts, on occasions such as this, on which we come together to worship God, and to seek from Him the continued extension of His help and blessing—cause for rejoicing to feel the new song of praise arising in return for the mercies which are new every morning. Truly we have abundant occasion to praise God even for those outward benefits which He bestows. It is well if, as we look forth morning by morning, at this season of the year, upon all the bounties and beauties which are displayed around us, the feeling of our minds corresponds with the words of the poet, where he speaks of the "incense breathing morn."

And there are higher benefits of an earthly kind, than the beauties which are displayed in leaf and flower, and the fruitful seasons with which we are favoured. There is a higher source of blessing in the social love, and interest, and sympathy, in which we are permitted to participate. Parents, as they look upon their children, and brothers and sisters and friends, as they enjoy each other's society, may well feel their hearts drawn forth in praise and thanksgiving to God. I do not doubt that it is often a cause of sorrow and regret to some of you, beloved friends, as it

is to myself, that our hearts are so slow to rise towards Him in gratitude for all His benefits. We may rejoice to believe that He to whom we owe all, and to whom we render such inadequate returns, does make most merciful allowance for our human weakness, and does graciously excuse our short-comings. But the belief that it is so, should lead us, instead of being content with things as they are, to inquire how it is that we are so deficient in the rendering of that which is due from us. It may be that such an inquiry would lead some of us to the discovery that the earthly benefits bestowed, have been so received and occupied with, as to have proved hindrances instead of helps to us: that we may have been content to enjoy them in forgetfulness of that which we owe to the Great Giver of all good; and have even set them up in the place which He alone should have occupied in our minds and affections, thus making idols of them, and bowing down to them and worshipping them. These weak hearts of ours need something of an outward kind to rest upon. It would be almost impossible for us to withdraw our affections from earthly things, if we had nothing else to turn to but a mere cold abstract idea of the great Ruler of all things.

We cannot be too thankful for that great revelation of His love which He has made to us in the gospel of His Son. One glorious object has been set before us, upon which we may rest the whole strength of our love, without any danger of that idolatry which does so largely appertain to the things of earth. And it is they who are brought nigh to God through Him, and who are brought

under the quickening power of the Lord's Spirit, to such a feeling of sinfulness and utter need as prepares them to accept the deliverance wrought out through Jesus Christ our Lord, who can, in the most important sense, adopt the words "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God." To such as these the earthly blessings which have been bestowed, assume a new aspect. They find in their social love and human sympathy illustrations of the far higher love displayed towards us in Christ. And these most precious of earthly gifts are no longer in danger of being swept away from them by the changes which come over us. It was a remarkable declaration of one of the early Christian teachers, that they only could be said to lose none dear to them, "to whom all were dear in Him who could not be lost."* If our friends be really ours in Christ, they may be regarded as a part of the treasure which we are laying up in heaven. We are everywhere surrounded by change, and we ourselves are changing, and soon to pass away.

Where are we laying up our treasure; how have we invested it? Have we provided ourselves with bags which will not wax old? In the words of another figure: are we building upon the sand or upon the rock? It is well for us indeed, if whilst enjoying and thanking God for the good gifts of His hand, and for the earthly companionships which He has provided, we can regard those who, from time to time are called from us, as being called in a yet higher sense to utter the new song of praise: "And they sang as it were a new song before the throne." The

* Augustine's Confessions, Book IV.

representations of heavenly blessedness are for the most part applicable, though in an inferior degree, to the experience of the Lord's children here on earth.

The new song of praise sung before the throne, and the work of the new creation which is described in the words, "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new," are but the perfection of the change which is witnessed even here. It is truly a great mistake for any to suppose, that when their hearts have been brought nigh to God through Jesus Christ, all their difficulties are at an end; for this change is but the beginning of a new warfare, and the being sent into a school in which some who seem to themselves to have made considerable progress, may have to be set to learn even their alphabet over again: "Ye have need that we teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God."

The heart which has been brought to some true acknowledgment of that which is due to God for all His benefits and blessings, is liable to be again entangled from time to time by the undue love of earth. And thus do we need to be set free afresh from our idolatries, by the quickening power of the Lord's Spirit, so that the new song of praise and worship may again arise.

BRISTOL, 8th month 12th, 1866.

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short," writes an apostle of Christ. "It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not, and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."

I suppose that one reason why many men are disposed to regard the religion of Christ as a gloomy thing, is because the Scriptures of the New Testament give so much prominence to, and speak so plainly of certain painful and unwelcome subjects from which men habitually turn away; such as the uncertainty of life—the instability of its possessions—and the certainty of death, and of the coming judgment. It is very unreasonable indeed to make this a ground of complaint against religion. Religion does not create these things. Their certainty would be as great if religion were silent respecting them. And they who have made the attempt to forget them, and to keep them out of view, have met with very poor success. Change and uncertainty meet them at every turn, and they themselves are constantly changing. Neither is it possible for them to divest their minds of the remembrance of death, of the sense of their responsibility to God, and of the

account which they may ere long be called to render unto Him. If the anticipation of that judgment seem somewhat uncertain to them at times, the uncertainty itself is fatal to the peace of mind without which there can be no true happiness. It may be possible indeed for men who are living in sin, to succeed to a certain extent in banishing such unwelcome ideas from their minds, and it is not surprising that they should turn away in disgust from a religion which brings them face to face with these solemn realities; not surprising that they should go away and speak of religion as a gloomy thing.

But such ought not, and indeed cannot be the testimony of any who have become really acquainted with the merciful provision for our necessities which it offers to us. If we have truly come to Christ, and partaken of His love, we shall be constrained to speak in far different terms of the "grace and truth which come by Him." It is not indeed that His followers are exempt from the change and uncertainty, the trial and the disappointment, which are to a greater or less extent the lot of all in this world. Nor can they do other than think of the last great change which awaits them, as a very solemn, if not an awful thing. But they have received, through the great manifestation of the love of God in Jesus Christ, as it was witnessed in His life and in His death, in His resurrection from the dead, and His ascension into heaven, a blessed assurance of pardon and forgiveness. And their hearts have been enlarged in the confidence, that He whose love has been so manifested, will make all needful provision for them as they journey on through the remainder of their pilgrimage.

Earth and earthly things come to wear a far different aspect for all such. They are in no wise tempted to think or speak lightly of all the bountiful provision of their Father's hand, as displayed in His earthly blessings; but they see that none of these things can be accounted possessions in the sense of their having an enduring interest in them, that they are but stewards of these things, and shall soon have to give an account concerning them.

Neither do the Lord's children think or speak lightly of earthly sorrow, for they are often bowed low under the weight of it: but they know that all such discipline is wisely and lovingly dispensed, and the burden is many a time lightened by the remembrance that the time is short, and by the thought of the glorious rest beyond. Their eyes have been anointed to behold a far off land, where no storms or tempests ever come, and where no flowers fade. Our knowledge of all which relates to that unseen world is necessarily dim and indistinct, but we have abundant assurance in the love and kindness whereof we here partake, that nothing of any kind shall be wanting to us, if we obtain part in the heavenly inheritance.

There is implied in the calling of the Christian, such an occupation with earthly things, as that they may be made subservient to our highest good. It is for him to use this world as not abusing it, and as one who is passing through it to a better inheritance. Our earthly associations, our love of our nearest and dearest relatives, are sometimes spoken of in Holy Scripture in such a manner as to imply inferiority to the higher love and service of the Lord our Saviour. It is not that we are to set light

by these things, but that we are only to allow them such place in our minds, as is consistent with the allegiance which we owe in all things unto Christ.

SIDCOT, 9th mo. 2nd, 1866.

The charge which was given by the apostle to his brethren to "remember them that suffered adversity as being themselves also in the body," has been much in my remembrance in connexion with a sad event which occurred last week; the circumstances of which are probably more or less known to those who are here present—the sudden and unlooked for removal by death of four of the scholars in the school of one of our friends; children, it may be as full of the hopes and expectations of life, and of the means and power of enjoyment, as any of those who are with us here this morning. There is mourning and lamentation in the houses of a number of our friends to-day, and whether it be in connexion with such sudden and unlooked for events as that to which I allude, or to the burdens which any of our friends are bearing about upon them from day to day, it is surely well for us, whether our own lot be one of sorrow or rejoicing, to yield our hearts and minds to a feeling of tender sympathy with those who suffer adversity. It is well for us when we are partaking of the unnumbered favours showered down upon us from day to day, to remember those who may be deprived of some of these. And it is especially well for us when we come thus together

to worship God, when we seek, as I trust many have sought this morning, for shelter and protection in the pavilion of our Heavenly Father's love and presence, to remember before Him those on whom He has seen meet to lay His hand in affliction.

It is not to be expected, it is not even to be desired, that children should bear as great a weight of painful feeling, either in reference to their own circumstances or those of others, as persons of more mature years. We may some times have witnessed the painful sight of children being made to overtask their powers of bodily endurance, by performing labour only suitable to be undertaken by men. But on the other hand, we know that it is no kindness to children to excuse them from labour altogether; and that on the contrary, it is very important that they should be gradually trained to exercise the powers bestowed upon them. It is one of the beneficent arrangements of Divine Providence that strength is increased by use. And this applies as much to mental and spiritual, as to bodily vigour. It is not indeed to be expected or desired that children should enter as deeply into the trials of others, as some of us, who are more advanced in life, may be called upon to do; but on the other hand, they need not turn aside altogether from the bearing of such burdens. It will not harm them, but rather do them good, when for example, one of their acquaintances is called hence by death, to turn, if but for a few moments, to the thought of the scene presented by the chamber of death. It will not harm them, but rather do them good, if they have themselves partaken of the kind care of loving parents, to realize, as far as they can, the

feeling of one who is called to receive the lifeless remains of a beloved child, whom he may last have seen in the full enjoyment of health and strength.

I do not indeed believe that it is the design of our Heavenly Father, as regards any of us, younger or older, that we should have our minds habitually occupied with gloomy or melancholy thoughts. It is impossible to look abroad on all the bountiful provision which our Heavenly Father has made for our enjoyment, as well as for our necessities, without coming to the conclusion that He designs the happiness of His human family. Speaking in general terms, I think we are safe in saying, that our Heavenly Father bestows upon us all, the enjoyment which He sees to be really good for us. The trials which He dispenses are evidently designed to promote our highest welfare, so that even by means of these, He designs that our happiness should be increased. Human life is truly represented by one of those beautiful autumn days, of which we have had several of late, in which storm and sunshine follow each other in quick succession. We see the bright morning quickly overcast, and then again the storm gives place to sunshine. Sometimes the rainbow of hope is seen resting on the darkest clouds, and sometimes a day of storm gives place to an evening of calm sunshine, a most fitting representation of those, the sun of whose life goes down in brightness, after many a storm has passed over them. It does not diminish, on the other hand it greatly increases, the comfort and enjoyment of a traveller who sets forth in the morning, that he is prepared for the changes and exigencies which he may have to

encounter. And so it is in regard to those who are prepared for the changes which come upon them in the day, and in the journey of life.

It is not for us to be habitually occupying ourselves with sad foreboding; but neither is it for us to shut our eyes to the dangers, difficulties and trials which are coming upon us. And if this forethought be called for, in regard to the ordinary changes and experiences of life, with what peculiar force does the consideration bear upon the last great change which awaits us all. Men do not really relieve themselves from the fear of death, by turning away from the thought of it. Put it from them as they will, it must and will return. They only can expect deliverance from the fear of death, whose great concern, whose earnest prayer and desire it is, to be prepared for it. The question whether we be indeed prepared, is one which belongs to us all. It belongs to children as well as to men, both because childhood itself is not exempt from the inroads of death, and because the great work of preparation is one which ought to occupy the whole course of life. We can none of us proceed far in this inquiry, without discovering the great need in which we stand, of free and full forgiveness, such as was proclaimed through Jesus Christ our Lord, and confirmed to the repentant sinner, by His death upon the cross.

And another great want which we shall discover, is that of the change which was spoken of by our blessed Lord in the words "ye must be born again." It may be that as we press this solemn inquiry upon ourselves, some of us find it difficult to return a distinct answer, as to whether

the work of preparation for this great change be going forward within us. We have not been altogether thoughtless about the matter, perhaps. There may have been times when it has been the uppermost concern with us; but at other times, the view of heavenly things has grown dim, and earth with its attractions, or its anxious cares, has come in again to occupy the mind. It is cause of thankfulness indeed, when the conviction of such failure is so brought home to us, that we are led to turn with renewed earnestness to the great Deliverer, and to commit ourselves, even as we commend others, to Him.

READING, 9th Month 8th, 1866.

"When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" was language made use of to express the experience of the Lord's children in very early times, and it has, in effect, been adopted many a time since, by those who have set their hope in God, and who, having sought to Him for help and refuge in their trials, dangers and perplexities, have again and again been made to rejoice in the deliverance wrought out for them. It has not been that they have in any wise been exempted from the common lot of trial,—on the contrary they have sometimes had an additional share allotted to them—but it has been permitted to them, through the anointing power and grace of God, not only to be supported under trial, and many a time delivered from their fears, but also to derive from such dispensations, help and instruction, such as have been

made a blessing to them. Such was the case with the Lord's servants under the dispensation of a former covenant. He was to them an ever present helper and hiding place. And the peace and rest which were ministered to them, have been still more clearly manifested in the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The revelation made through Him was emphatically one of peace and rest. "Peace on earth" formed part of the announcement made to the shepherds concerning the Saviour's birth, of which we have heard this morning. Rest unto the soul was the great blessing which He offered to the weary and and heavy laden.

He came not indeed to make peace with sin, but to the contrite and repentant sinner, His word was ever one of peace. And when at length He was taken from His disciples, and when they were left to mourn what seemed to them to be the destruction of their hopes, and of the expectations which they had formed as to the deliverance which He should effect for His people, how striking is the record left us, concerning the manner in which He appeared among them the evening of His resurrection, and again a week later, when they were assembled together, "the doors being shut for fear of the Jews," and uttered those words of gracious salutation, "Peace be unto you." And similar to this has been the comfort often witnessed in succeeding times, by disciples who have gathered in their Saviour's name, and have known His gracious promise of being in the midst of them, to be fulfilled, and the word of peace and rest to be again proclaimed to the troubled and the weary ones. I trust that many here were prepared to

unite in the words of thanksgiving, uttered in an earlier part of this meeting, for the calming influence which seemed to be spread over us, as we sat down here. And I trust, my dear friends, that this occasion may be one on which the peace and love of Christ may be so shed abroad in our hearts, that we may receive help and blessing proportioned to our need, a supply of bread such as may suffice for the need of the day. Daily bread is all which we should expect or desire to receive. It is perhaps natural for us to wish for something more. We might prefer to have in our hands a store on which to rely for the future, and such as might prevent the recurrence of daily want, and of unceasing dependence; but it would not be good for us.

There is a quietude and confidence of a different kind, felt by those who are living in estrangement from God. What do they know of the sense of daily need, who are saying in effect: "Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up in store for many years?" They are satisfied with themselves, content for things to be as they are with them. They are quiet and at rest; but their sleep is the sleep of death. They are even now, in a comparative sense dead, and if their course of alienation be pursued, it will result in eternal death. It is oftentimes a thankless engagement to go and arouse these sleepers. Their request is for more sleep: "A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep." We have heard of travellers in mountain regions, in danger of perishing from cold, whose earnest wish is to lie down to sleep, but who are certain if they do so, never to waken again in this world. It is an ungracious task to arouse

them, and to insist on their pursuing their walk, but their very lives depend on it. And so it is with those who are in danger of sleeping the sleep of spiritual death. Outward safety depends, oftentimes, on our being willing to be aroused from our indifference, and to look our difficulties in the face. We know how much depends, in times of commercial difficulty, on a man's disposition to ascertain the worst, to see exactly how he stands. Those who find themselves in such a position, are afraid to do this, afraid to take stock and to balance their books whereas if they had the courage to ascertain the exact state of things, and then to take counsel with their friends concerning their difficulties, there would be a great probability of their being extricated. So again, it is in a spiritual sense. We need to be brought low, to have our real condition discovered to us, and to come to the acknowledgment that we are in debt, and have nothing to pay, in order that we may be prepared for the joyful reception of the atoning grace of the Gospel.

There is a great change wrought, slowly and very imperfectly it may be at first, but there is a great change wrought in the condition of that man, who, having accepted the redeeming love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, is brought to the perception, that all which he is and has, must be freely given up in return. Instead of looking upon the earthly good which falls to his lot, as an abiding inheritance, he receives it as a precious treasure, entrusted to him for a little while, and concerning which he must soon be called to give an account. Whatever may have been the degree of serenity before enjoyed, there must have been an oft-recurring and

unwelcome remembrance, that all in which his soul delighted might be swept away at any moment, whereas now, the ability is felt, or should be felt, to look up through the secondary gifts and blessings, to that higher and eternal blessedness and joy, which God has laid up in store for His children. So it is in regard to that best of all the earthly blessings which our Father in heaven has bestowed upon us, the social love and intercourse which we enjoy, the love of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, of friends for their friends. I am often reminded in this connexion, of the words of one of the early Christian teachers, that "they only can be said to lose none dear to them to whom all are dear in Him who cannot be lost."

I know that I am speaking of a high attainment, the view of which may serve to convince some of us, how far we yet are from that full realization of the peace of God. But it is a great favour, when those who have been distressed and brought low, are permitted some fresh experience of that holy calm which might lead them to exclaim: "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" It is given at such times to the bereaved mourners to feel, that all which they have lost, which can really minister to their highest welfare, shall be restored to them.

"What shall make trouble? not the holy thought
Of the departed—that shall be a part
Of those undying things which faith has wrought,
Into a world of beauty in the heart.
Not the forms past away,
Which time's strong current bore;
The dark stream might not stay,
The ocean shall restore."

We are surrounded by unceasing change and uncertainty. It is nearly twenty years since I had an opportunity of sitting down with you here on an occasion of this kind. Many changes have passed over you since then, and there are others soon to follow. Most of the seats around me are otherwise occupied than they were then. We are admonished in many ways and by many things, to seek an establishment in that which cannot be moved, even in the "grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ."

Bristol, 9th Month 26th, 1866.

"And while the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

We have no means, dear friends, of knowing what was the particular lesson of instruction which our Lord may have designed to convey, by the incident which He thus introduced into the parable of the ten virgins. We do not even know that any such lesson was intended, and I am more than ever persuaded of the danger of bringing human authority to bear, in regard to the exact meaning of each particular portion of Holy Scripture. It is very probable that apart from the chief aim of each of those beautiful parables, by which He made known the truths of His heavenly kingdom, through illustrations drawn from the common affairs of life, it was His design

to minister varied instruction by means of them: but some of the incidents introduced may have been simply intended to effect, what was after all a very important purpose, the presentation of a truth in a form which should interest the minds, and satisfy the hearts of those who heard or read them. But again, it is probable, that some portions of these figurative statements may be fitted, though not specially designed perhaps, to convey instruction of a varied character to different minds. And so it may be with this description given us of the ten virgins, whilst they were awaiting the return of the bridegroom: "They all slumbered and slept." That description may suggest to some of those, whose condition corresponds to that of the wise virgins, that they should beware of becoming too much like them, by resigning themselves to sleep.

But it has rather come before me in a different point of view, as showing instructively, like some other parts of the parable, how much similarity there may be, between those who are essentially dissimilar. These virgins were all disposed, it should seem, to honour the bridegroom on his return. All were waiting to do so. All had lamps ready for going forth into the darkness of the night, and each had a vessel to receive oil wherewith to trim their lamps. And whilst the bridegroom tarried, they rested together. No dissimilarity is spoken of, save in this one thing, that the wise took oil in their vessels, but the foolish neglected to do so. They were distinguished simply by their empty oil-cans. And does not all this correspond with what is observable in regard to those two great classes of men who are so described?

How very much they are oftentimes alike, though so essentially unlike? They may dwell together as members of the same household, may sit down together from day to day to listen to the words of Holy Scripture, or may professedly unite in drawing near to God in prayer. (And moreover I believe it would be well, if in some of our households, the words of humble thanksgiving and of earnest prayer, were more often heard.) The men belonging to these two great classes may come together to a place of worship, and sit there side by side, and listen to, and to a certain extent, alike receive, what they may hear on such occasions, and yet after all, there is the essential difference, which consists in the one class receiving and retaining the grace of God in their hearts, whilst it is refused or lost by the other.

And this particular description: "they all slumbered and slept," has seemed to me to suggest some instructive points of similarity between the two classes. Do they not alike await the coming of the Lord, or the call to stand before Him in judgment, with a far less vivid realization of that which is implied in it, than must be felt by those who listen to the shout, "Behold the bridegroom cometh?" I do not believe that it is the design of our Heavenly Father, that there should be in the ordinary course of life, any such vivid realization, or that it would be found to consist with that due discharge of the common duties of life—which is, after all, an important part of our stewardship—or with the right enjoyment of those countless earthly blessings which our Heavenly Father is pleased to shower down upon us. And there is, moreover, a certain sort of

repose felt by each of these classes in regard to the future, over and above their imperfect realization of it. The repose of the one consists in dismissing it as far as possible from their thoughts; but it is after all a kind of troubled sleep. There is nothing in it indeed, of that true repose which was spoken of by our blessed Lord, when He invited the weary and heavy laden to come and find rest unto their souls in Christ. Their condition of mind is rather spoken of as like unto the troubled sea. In the case of the other class, there is a far clearer recognition of the future that lies before them, with all its dangers and uncertainties, but they have found, and continue to find, rest unto their souls in Christ.

First-day, 10th Mo. 28th, 1866.

WILLIAM TANNER'S LAST SERMON IN BRISTOL.

Ten days before his death.

The apostle Paul speaks in one of his epistles, of God's "kindness towards us through Christ Jesus," and in another, of the "kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man," as having appeared. And it is a very animating thing, to consider the manner in which the Most High has been pleased to manifest Himself to us, not only as the Almighty Ruler, offering a free pardon to His rebellious subjects, but also, as we have heard, as a loving Father, whose care and kindness are continually extended

to His children. And such is emphatically the representation made to us in the Gospel. And yet it is not alone in the Gospel that such a discovery is presented. The daily course of our own experience bears a similar testimony to our Heavenly Father's goodness towards us, in that He not only provides a supply for our more urgent needs, but is also pleased, in a great variety of ways, to minister to our comfort and enjoyment. And even that which might at first sight appear to be an exception to the rule, the suffering and trial which are dispensed to us, comes to be regarded by the eye of faith, as a further, and in some sort a higher evidence of His love, seeing that such dispensations are not only over-ruled for good, but are often made a direct means of bringing us back to the enjoyment of our Heavenly Father's love and kindness.

And again, the records of the Old Testament bear ample witness to the same features of the Divine government and dealing. Although one feature of the former covenant was of a legal character, there was no lack on the part of the Lord's children, in that former age, of the love and kindness wherewith He was wont to deal with them, of His pitying them as a father pitieth his children. The Psalmist speaks of having been "crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercy," and I know not how many times those beautiful words "loving-kindness," are repeated in that one book of Psalms. We find, in the writings of the Prophets, the same glowing representation of the love and kindness of God, as being like to that of a father, and even to that of a husband: I have betrothed thee unto me in loving-kindness, and in mercies." And yet there was a fuller

and larger manifestation of these great characteristics of the Divine procedure, reserved for the Gospel of Christ, and seen above all in Him who was the messenger of the New Covenant. Men have often described and dwelt upon the exceeding tenderness, as distinguished from love in its larger and more comprehensive sense—the exceeding tenderness and kindness which were constantly manifested by the Lord our Saviour, towards all who came to Him for help. But we may safely say, that no human heart or mind has formed any adequate conception of that marvellous revelation of the Divine character.

And whilst the kindness and love of God towards man, were thus more powerfully set forth than they had ever been before, the corresponding duty devolving upon man, to manifest kindness and love towards his fellows, was also more plainly and powerfully taught. Our Lord would have His followers to join with their own prayer to be forgiven, the appeal that they had themselves forgiven them that trespassed against them, and to extend their kindness to their enemies, even as their Heavenly Father was kind to the unthankful and the evil. And so do we find the apostles calling upon their brethren, to be kind and forgiving, even as they themselves had been forgiven, to "be pitiful and courteous," and to "love as brethren." We have seen something of the power which kindness exerts in the intercourse of man with man. We have known cases in which the ear which has been closed to every other appeal, has been open to words of kindness. There is nothing, perhaps, which children perceive more quickly than the kindness or the unkindness with which

they are treated. It would be well indeed if children, and many others of maturer years, who are so ready to perceive the kindness or the unkindness manifested by others towards them, were equally alive to the importance of manifesting kindness towards others. Children are often but little aware how much pain, how much harm they may occasion by an unkind look or word, or on the other hand how much good even they may do by a word or act of kindness. And again, if we consider the state of things existing in our households, I believe it will be found that the happiness enjoyed there, is to a large extent dependent on the prevalence of kindness. It is not enough that we seek to discharge our duties towards those with whom we are thus connected. We may go on seeking to discharge our duties in a servile spirit, and in such a manner, as fails to commend to others the desire which we really feel for their good. And the benefits which we desire to communicate, may fail to be received by others, simply because they are not offered in a kinder and more loving spirit.

It is a matter of common observation, that whilst one man will give to others in so kindly a manner, that the kindness does as much, or more good than the gift, another gives so grudgingly, and in so unkind a manner, that the value of the gift is in great measure destroyed. But in speaking of kindness in its relation to human intercourse, we must bear in mind that it sometimes fails of its object, simply because there is no disposition to receive it, no response to the overtures which are made. And does not this deficiency largely apply to our failure to

enjoy, as we might do, the kindness and love extended to us by our Heavenly Father? We know that there is no deficiency on His part, and yet we fail oftentimes to receive the favours so kindly dispensed. It is by means of our human intercourse, that we are enabled in some degree to rise to the conception of the kindness and compassion of the Most High. But we find in the revelation which He makes, of the love with which He is prepared to deal with us, a standard by which we should seek to regulate our intercourse with others.

And then turning again from the earthly to the heavenly relationships, we are enabled to trace some of the causes of our spiritual failures, and to see how largely they consist in the want of readiness to receive the love made known. In some cases the difficulty may be most felt in those seasons of outward prosperity, in which the danger arises of losing sight of the great Giver in the gifts which He has bestowed. In other instances, the clouds of sorrow which hang over us, at times may appear so dense, that it is difficult to believe that the sun of the Divine favour is shining brightly above those clouds, and that in due time they will separate, and the light again break forth.

We need in our joys and in our sorrows, and in the daily round of our occupations and duties, an abiding sense of the kindness and love which our Heavenly Father is waiting to bestow upon us, and a readiness to accept His favour with humble joy and thankfulness.

ERRATA.

Page 29 line 7, *read* "as well as " *instead of* "well as as."

,, 66 ,, 6, *for* "I" *read* "S."

,, 152 ,, 6, a comma after "these."

,, 155 ,, 18, *read* "meeting" *for* "meetings."

,, 171 last line, *read* "spirits" *for* "spirit."

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